

THE
TRIUMPH
OF
BENEVOLENCE;

OR, THE
HISTORY
OF
FRANCIS WILLS.
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

BERLIN:
Sold by AUGUST MYLIUS.
1786.

THE HISTORY

OF THE

AMERICAN

REPUBLIC

IN THE

WEST

INDIAN

AND

THE

THE TRIUMPH
OF
BENEVOLENCE.

CHAPTER XX.

A remarkable instance of gratitude. The triumph of prudence: and the course WILLS took, when he had received the reward of his good nature.

WILLS had not been much at home during his endeavours to release Belton. This alarmed his aunt, as well from her regard to his personal safety, as her fear lest he should follow evil courses, and run into extravagance: and indeed he could not have taken, in her opinion, a more evil course, than that which led to the spending of his money. The noble captain Mac Gregor, who was now become a constant visitor, and received on the footing

of an old acquaintance, or rather, an intimate friend, did not fail to improve these notions; which Miss Kingley no sooner conceived, than she communicated to him. This was what Mac Gregor aimed at. To be made a confidant in the family, was a token of importance: he failed not to improve the circumstance, and at last became necessary to Miss Kingley, on whom our judicious reader will, no doubt, perceive, that he had cast the eye of desire: but whether his affection proceeded from his fondness for the lady, or the greatness of her fortune, we leave to him to determine: it is our business to relate facts only. Wills, in order to release Belton, had mortgaged one hundred pounds per annum. He knew that he should never be in his aunt's good graces again, if she came to the knowledge of this circumstance: he therefore determined to live at home entirely, with as much frugality as possible, and to apply himself totally to his studies. This reformation in his manners pleased his aunt much, and he was beginning to win upon her again: for she thought his conduct, which was in reality the effect of necessity, a tacit approbation of her principles and manners. But this

this scene was soon changed; and poor Wills, like his father, was made the sacrifice of avarice. But it is necessary, for the reader's instruction, to unravel this affair.

Mac Gregor, who was a man that regarded his worldly interests very much, was acquainted with several of those people, who procure money in the city, and as sometimes a man who is attentive may make a lucky hit in that way, he thought it profitable to be known to them: besides, as they were not very extravagant people, he could not spend much money in their company. The discourse among them one night happened to turn upon personal beauty in men, and several nice distinctions were made among these discerning gentlemen, when one of them said, he had never seen a handsomer man than a Mr. Wills, who was at his office a few days before that. Mac Gregor cocked up his ears at that intelligence, and pretending not to know him, asked him what manner of man he was. The other, in order to support his opinion, gave him a minute description of Wills's person. And here we cannot help digressing, to assure our reader, that it was such a one
as

as the author of a certain voyage promises in the title of his book, where he intends to give his readers a *minute* description of the *gigantic* people called Patagonians — Mac Gregor immediately found Miss Kingley's nephew in this description: and the relator being a countryman of his, he could not help asking him what business he had there. The other refused to tell him at first; but being over-persuaded, and an additional tiff of punch called for, he divulged the whole affair, and informed Mac Gregor of every transaction. Wills, whom Mac Gregor considered as his only obstacle, was now in his power: but how to convince Miss Kingley that he had done this thing, was not easily contrived. He determined to make a bold push, and asked the other where the deeds were: the Scotchman told him, in his power. Then Mac Gregor opened his whole scheme to his friend; and giving him to understand what a promising prospect there was of his being possessed of all the old maid's fortune, and assuring him that he would reward him very amply, when in his power, if he would confide in him, and let him have the deeds for one day only. Terms were settled, and Mac
Gregor

Gregor got possession of the deed; with which he hastened, as fast as he could go, to the presence of his beloved.

He arrived there soon after breakfast: and Wills being retired to his library, he found Miss Kingley, very fortunately, alone. After the usual ceremonies, he began to assure her of the profound respect he entertained for her, and that his gratitude for the civilities he had received from her would not suffer him to see her interest prejudiced, or conceal any thing from her where that might be at stake. He could not have alarmed her more than by this exordium. The very sound of her interest being prejudiced, awoke all her attention. She thanked him very heartily for his kindness; and assured him, on the other hand, that she should take every method in her power to make him an adequate return: but intreated to know, what it was that he had to reveal to her. That was not to be done at once. He represented to her, to enhance the obligation, that he should, through his regard for her, offend a friend whom he owed many good services to; but he must insist upon a promise never to reveal it. This she instantly assent-

assented to, but yet he hesitated; and began to apologize for the giddiness and warmth of temper in young people; that great allowances should be made; and he repented having gone so far, considering how the young gentleman was situated. "Ah!" said she, interrupting him, "my nephew "has been doing some rash thing."

"There's no escaping your penetration, "Madam," said the captain; "it is but too true: and it goes to my heart, to think "that I should accuse him of paying so "little attention to prudence."

"Ah! Sir," said she eagerly, "what has "he done?"

"I fear to tell you, Madam; but you "must promise not to be angry with him."

"Let me know instantly," said she, raised to the highest pitch of doubt and suspense.

Mac Gregor answered, by putting the deed into her hands; which, when she understood the signification of, her rage was not

not to be expressed. Mac Gregor was obliged to calm her transports, to prevent her informing poor Wills of it at once. He represented to her, that he should act cautiously, and not expose him to the reproaches of her nephew, who would very justly accuse him of being an incendiary; when nothing in the world would have made him guilty of such an act, but his friendship for her, and that she might be a witness of the bad use he made of his fortune. Her transports subsided, and she submitted entirely to the guidance of Mac Gregor. They then entered into a consultation how to break the matter to him, and were puzzling themselves to find out to what purpose this immense sum could be applied. Mac Gregor insinuated, that it might be for the supplying some favourite girl; for Wills had not been more finely dressed than ordinary lately, nor had he been seen with much money about him; therefore this conjecture was established. "Ah the lewd villain!" said Miss Kingley, "I will be even with him: fear me not."

"But, Madam, consider me."

"De-

“Depend upon it, my dear captain,
“your safety is as dear to me as my own.”

He departed, to return the deed, of which he had made such notable use, into the hands of his friend; and she, to ruminate on this adventure, and to determine how she should proceed with her unfortunate nephew, who never dreamed of the storm that was brewing. — And here we cannot help offering a conjecture, that it was more from the apprehension that Wills would take a proper *personal* satisfaction from Mac Gregor for interfering in his affairs, than from the *verbal* odium or scandal that might be thrown upon him by a set of people whom he despised most heartily, called the honest and generous part of the world, that he insisted upon Miss Kingley's keeping the part he bore, in disclosing this affair, a secret.

After a silent dinner on the part of the aunt, and not very entertaining to Wills, when the things were removed, and the servant gone, she asked him, whether he had given over all thoughts of Miss Collins. He assured her, with great truth, that

that he had. "And have you formed no
"other connection, Frank?"

"None in the world, Madam."

"Come," says she, "I know young
"men can't live without a mistress: It is
"excusable: I am sure you are paying
"your addresses to somebody."

"My heart is entirely disengaged."

"Then what have you been doing so
"often in London lately?"

"Business, indeed, Madam, took me
"there, and not pleasure."

"What, I suppose you were looking
"out for a proper place for yourself. It is
"very commendable truly. [He remained
silent] "Was it so?" said she.

He answered, that it was not.

"How comes that about? for I imagin-
"ed, by your raising four hundred pounds,
"you were going to purchase some pro-

“fitable place, or procure yourself some
“employment without my knowledge. —
“I am sure it must be so, or you
“could never have occasion for so much
“money.”

Wills knew not what to answer, accustomed from his infancy never to be guilty of a breach of truth. He had no notion of denying the fact, or concealing his motives for doing it, since he found her acquainted with what he had done. It was a thunder-stroke to him; for he would have done every thing in his power to have kept it from her knowledge, as he well knew that, in her present disposition, it would infallibly be his utter ruin. “’Tis
“very true, Madam, that I have done so;
“and I should be very glad to know how
“it reached you.”

“That you shall never know. But pray
“for what purpose did you raise this immense sum of money?”

“For the best of purposes; to relieve
“honesty and virtue from want and ruin.”

“I sup-

“I suppose you have got undeniable security for your money.”

“I never thought of it.”

“I wonder how you could attempt to dispose of my property, without my consent.”

“I thought, Madam, you had given that estate to me.”

“But did not I redeem it before, Sir? pray let me hear on whom you have squandered this sum of money.”

Wills related the story partly: for he concealed the names, and their present situation, lest his aunt should take it into her head to go to them: but he enlarged on their distressed and miserable situation, and described the horrors of their prison, with an eloquence and a particularity that would have melted any heart that was not steeled by avarice.

“And so, Sir,” said she to him, when he had finished, “it is upon rascally agents,

“and pretended faints, that you bestow
“your money. I did not imagine that
“your estate was sufficient to support you,
“and pay off other peoples debts. How-
“ever, I am very glad to hear it is; and
“I have no doubt but it will encrease in
“such good hands as yours; therefore,”
added she, “it would be very ridiculous
“in me to maintain you; who can main-
“tain other people. I think Mr. Wills,
“the least you could have done was, to
“have acquainted me with this intention of
“yours; and if money was to be raised to
“pay any bodies debts, it should be your
“own, for I have expended a great deal of
“money on you; but as that is past, and
“now lost for ever, I shall think nothing of
“it: but I must do myself justice. The
“money I laid out on your education and
“other things I won’t mind; but I am de-
“termined to be paid the money which I ad-
“vanced to take up the mortgage on your
“estate. Here is the account: and you see,
“after making all allowances, there re-
“mains five hundred forty-nine pounds,
“seventeen shillings and six pence due to
“me. Now, as it would distress you to
“pay it all at once, I will consent to
“take

“take it by seventy pounds a year, till
 “the whole is paid: and I think, in ho-
 “nour and justice, you cannot deny me
 “that. The good people whom you have
 “lent this money to, will, I have no
 “doubt of it, soon repay you; and then
 “you will be able to clear off my debt the
 “sooner.” She paused, waiting for an an-
 fwer, which Frank was not capable of giv-
 ing her. Finding him silent, she added,
 “Another thing I will mention; that, as
 “your living here encreases my expence,
 “and you have a notion of going into the
 “world, you will see more of it any where
 “else than in this house.”

He could bear it no longer. “The re-
 “spect and the veneration I have for you,
 “Madam,” said he, “and have ever had
 “since my tenderest years; the obligations
 “I am under to you, and the grateful sense
 “of them shall never be effaced from my
 “heart. I will most readily subscribe that
 “agreement you propose, or any other. I
 “will also quit your house, sorry that my
 “conduct has been so offensive to you, as to
 “make my exile from it necessary to your
 “happiness: but you will give me leave to

“say, that whoever informed you of this
“affair, was no friend to either of us.”

"That is as it may turn out, Sir."

"It is so: but I am entirely ignorant
"of the person."

“So you shall remain. I shall be glad
“to see you to-morrow to execute this
agreement.” She left him to his cogita-
tions, and went up stairs.

This was a sad reverse of affairs for poor Wills, who had hitherto been nursed in the soft lap of prosperity, and had seldom met any cross accident. There was no opposing the storm, or stemming the current of adverse fortune. His cloaths and books were soon packed up: he left them ready for removal, and went off to London to secure an habitation for himself. He got a cheap lodging in a private street; and, lying there that night, went to his aunt in the morning, signed his agreement with her, and, taking his leave of her, put his things into a coach, and came to London. Here we shall leave him for a while, endeav-

endeavouring to reconcile himself to his fate: and, in the mean time, end this, and begin another chapter.

CHAPTER XXI.

In which the reader, if he has not a good memory, will be obliged to have recourse to the first chapter of this history.

MAC Gregor, who now found the coast clear by the removal of young Wills, redoubled his assiduities, and was extremely well received by Miss Kingley, who considered his taking the trouble of making those enquiries after her nephew, as the strongest proofs of his regard to her. He rejoiced in the success of his scheme, and looked on her as tolerably secure. Meanwhile Wills went over to see Belton and his daughter, who were anxious about him, and concluded, his not coming to see them was owing to illness: but their fears were very agreeably removed by his presence. He pleaded business of one kind or another to excuse himself. He spent the day with them: and, though he endeavour-

ed to appear as chearful and unconcerned as possible, yet there was a gloom hung over his countenance, that all his attempts at mirth could not dissipate. This was not so visible to Belton, as to the penetrating eyes of Sophia; whose heart was deeply interested in every thing that concerned Wills. She repeatedly asked him if he was well; seemed to hint he did not look so well as formerly; and strove to be merry, in order to chear his spirits. He appeared pleased; and, upon enquiry, found that they had not heard from their relation in the country. In his way home, he could not help resolving not to go so often as usual to see them. "I cannot," said he to himself, "for the soul of me, so effectually conceal my grief and uneasiness at my present situation, but it is to be seen through; and, if they should ever happen to know that it is by assisting them I came to forfeit my aunt's favour, it will make them always unhappy: for that reason, I will see them but seldom."

Now it was, when, left entirely to himself, that he lamented his not being brought up to some profession, or instructed in

in some science. He praised that injunction of Mahomet's, which obliges every Grand Signior to be taught some handicraft trade, that, in case he should ever be deposed, he may know how to get his bread, if he is reduced so low. But it might be commanded for another reason, in order to employ the mind of the monarch in a profitable manner for his subjects; and that, by knowing how much labour was bestowed on the different articles necessary and useful in life, he should spare the taxation of them.

Not being always able to amuse himself with his books, he frequented a neighbouring coffeehouse, where he soon picked up many acquaintances of his own age: but as they were generally too extravagant for his scheme of life, for he determined never to run in debt, he dropped most of them. However, there were two or three who, from a similarity of circumstances and temper, he selected, and made his friends. Of these Jack Allen and Tom Lawson were the chief. Allen's father was a man of property in the north of England, and Jack his only son; but having been extravagant,

in consequence of his good nature and the easiness of his temper, the father refused to pay his bills; and Jack had lived in continual dread of the bailiffs for some months before that. This was an additional recommendation to Wills; who did all he could to assist him. Lawfon was dependent upon a mother, who little regarded him; but to whose jointure he must succeed on her death. In the mean time he "endured the bitter gripes of smarting poverty." Wills, from the fifty pounds a year that was left him, could ill supply their wants; but, as far as he could, he was always ready and willing. He did not forget Belton and his daughter entirely. It was near a month since he had been there; and his inability to assist them, in case they should have wanted any thing, prevented his going over to them sooner. Upon his enquiring for them, he was informed they were gone away, and had left a letter for him: it was as follows.

"Sir.

"**A**S I have no other means of informing you of my situation, than by
"leav-

"leaving this letter for you, being unac-
 "quainted with your address, I take this
 "method to let you know, that I have re-
 "ceived an invitation, in the most cordial
 "and affectionate manner, from that rela-
 "tion you heard me mention, to go and
 "live with her. I go out of town to-mor-
 "row morning, and should have been hap-
 "py in embracing my benefactor before I
 "left London. Both Sophy and I lament
 "exceedingly our being denied that plea-
 "sure: but hope you will let us know,
 "now and then, as convenient to you,
 "how you do. If I should be once more
 "prosperous in the world, it will give me
 "infinite satisfaction to repay you those
 "sums you so generously advanced for me:
 "but we can do nothing else at present than
 "offer up our prayers to the giver of all
 "good things, to shower down his bles-
 "sings on you, and to continue them long.
 "Permit me to subscribe myself,

"Your ever grateful

"and devoted servant,

"ROBERT BELTON."

He

He found, by the date of the letter, that they had been gone near a fortnight: this pleased him much; for it removed them from beholding his necessities: and it was out of his power to help them: he therefore thought this a lucky accident. However, he did not fail to acquaint them with the receipt of their letter, and assure them of his friendship and regard.

Much as he had suffered from his attention and readiness to serve the needy and distressed, it did not at all prevent him from exercising his humanity as far as his narrow circumstances would admit. Walking one afternoon in one of the new streets at the outskirts of London, he heard the sound of hasty steps after him: he turned about, and saw, at a little distance behind him, an elderly man, but poorly dressed, who had nevertheless an air of gentility, which appeared through his tattered habit. Curiosity induced him to turn about: and when he had satisfied himself who it was that followed him, he pursued his course. As he walked but slowly, the person before described, soon overtook him. He joined him, and, pulling off his hat, entreat-

treated his pardon for addressing him. Wills returned his salute, and told him he should be glad to know how he could serve him. "Sir," said the stranger, "I hope
"you will not be offended at my speaking
"to you; but necessity compels me to it.
"I have had the honour of bearing his
"majesty's commission. I served all the
"last war, I was in such a regiment, was
"at St. Cas at the unfortunate descent there.
"I was in America, and in several other
"places. My commanders can give ample
"testimonies of my behaviour. I received
"five wounds, and have shed my blood in
"the service of my king and country. But
"when the peace was concluded, the regi-
"ment that I belonged to was reduced; and
"my half-pay was all I had to support a
"wife and four children. I experienced ma-
"ny wants, and have been driven to many
"shifts, before I could thus submit to ask
"for charity. It was the day before yester-
"day that I sold the lace off my last coat,
"to procure food for my infants. I made
"bold to tell you my unhappy situation.

"Make no apology, Sir," said Wills, his heart bursting with anguish at the recital

cital of the story, told with a great deal of simplicity, and by a man whose conscious pride and honour prevented his speech, and almost choaked his utterance: "I would to
"God my abilities were equal to my wishes
"to serve you. They are not: but if you
"will meet me at seven o'clock to morrow
"evening at such a coffee-house, we may
"think of ways and means of doing some-
"thing to extricate you from your imme-
"diate distress. In the mean time, Sir, do
"me the favour to accept of this trifle. I
"have but four shillings in my pocket, and
"there are three of them."

"Sir," returned the officer, "I thank
"you; and lest you should think me an
"impostor, though my lodgings are not
"far off, if you will do me the honour to
"go with me there, I will convince you of
"the truth of what I say."

"No, Sir, I cannot go now; but I shall
"hope to meet you to morrow evening."

"You shall, Sir;" and taking his leave very politely, he departed, leaving poor Wills very much dejected from such a disagreeable rencounter.

He

He could not help thinking it particularly hard, that an officer who had spent his youth, and perhaps his fortune, in the service of his country, should be left destitute in his old age, with the additional misery of seeing a wife and children starving along with him: he lamented, that he had so little money in his pocket; and was angry with himself, that he did not give him all he had. These thoughts employed him till he returned to the coffee-house to read the papers, and the discourse happening to turn upon objects of charity, Wills related what had befallen him, only concealing what he had given. "Sir," said a sagacious old fellow, who nevertheless did not seem to have much humanity in his composition, and who was sitting in a corner of the room, "had not this officer an old blue coat on?" and went on describing the particulars of his person and dress.

Wills answered, "he wore such things."

"Well then, young gentleman, this same officer told me the same story a year and a half ago; and I'll engage he
"picks

“picks up a very good livelihood by it:
“but officers are his particular prey: they
“assist him liberally, and I believe the
“fellow is an hypocrite and an impostor.”

“Ah, Sir,” said Wills, “judge not so
“hardly of him; he bore all the marks of
“real distress, and to morrow evening he
“is to meet me here.”

“If he does,” replied the other, “I will
“alter my opinion of him; but be assured
“he will not: those marks of distress are
“easily assumed.”

Wills was much surprized when he
found that no officer came. The old gentleman was waiting also there to see the
issue of his prediction, which he found
verified. “I believe, Sir,” said Wills,
“you were right; but I should be very
“sorry to think that, because a man may
“be imposed upon two or three times, he
“should suppose all in distress are impos-
“tors, and refuse to assist them.” Thus
ended that adventure, and yet Wills did
not at all find himself less susceptible of
the calls of humanity.

His

His friend Allen now stood in need of it. His circumstances grew more desperate; and when he ventured abroad, it was in manifest danger of his liberty. In a cabinet council that was held at Wills's lodgings, it was resolved upon, that he should go down to the country to his father, who might be softened into compassion by his presence: but how he should go was the question. He had a journey of near two hundred miles to take and not a shilling in his pocket. Wills, whose whole stock was somewhat less than four guineas, offered it to him; and proposed travelling with the waggon, as the cheapest and most private method. This was also agreed on, and Tom Lawson and Wills accompanied him to the inn where the waggon was to put up the first night, and where our reader found them thoroughly wet in the first chapter of this most delightful history. And as they have been asleep for a long while, it is high time to waken some of them.

C H A P T E R XXII.

Reasons offered why this should be considered and consequently read, as the third chapter of this history. WILLS's journey; the accident that befel him, and the consequences of it.

WE have now given our reader a full account of Frank Wills and his companions, whom we introduced him to so very abruptly in the beginning of this history. But if he should be displeased at being carried such a round-about way, he may skip over all the intermediate chapters between the second and the latter end of the one preceding this, and will learn, that it was only to accompany a friend that he got so heartily wet, and walked so far. And in this practice of boldly plunging into the middle of affairs, we are supported by the authority of the most respectable names of antiquity; no less than Homer, and his successor in bays, Virgil. It was their custom to set the reader down in the midst of the tumults and hurry of the work, and let him get out as he could, though it must be

be confessed they helped him a little: and for this reason is it, that some schoolmasters, and in particular he, who had the honour of instructing the laborious author of these never-enough to be admired memoirs, make their boys read the second and third *Æneids* of Virgil, before they touch on the first. If our courteous reader has a mind to comply with this custom, he need only instead of chapter *twenty-two*, call this chapter *three*, and pursue the history.

About three o'clock in the morning, Allen, who lay in the same room with Wills, was awakened by the waggoner; and Wills having given him all the money in his pocket, except six shillings, he shook hands with him and Lawson, and bad them farewell. He departed, and they composed themselves to sleep, which they enjoyed till seven o'clock, when they rose in order to return to town. A more charming morning was never seen: and the prospect of an agreeable walk, compensated for the trouble and fatigue of the preceding evening: but the waters were out, and the whole country seemed almost overflowed: so heavy a fall of rain had not

been known for a long time. However, our travellers set forward, and finding a path in the fields, that the heat of the sun had dried a little, they pursued their course. Their conversation turned chiefly upon poor Allen, who had left them; and they were not sparing in their good wishes for his success. As the high road ran through a hollow way between two little hills, on one of which was the path they kept, they could see the road for a good way before them, and perceived a post-chaise at a little distance, in which were three women, approaching to a very large and rapid stream of water that ran across the road. They had just entered it as Wills and his companion drew near it on the other side; but they secured their passage by a wooden bridge that was thrown over it in that part of the fields. The horse who was in the shafts was very young and skittish, and finding the stream of water bear so hard against him, was frightened, and began to rear and plunge. The horse on which the driver rode, who did not seem possessed of much skill or cleverness, was terrified at the noise and splashing of the water, and began to be resty too. The ladies, who had reason
son

son to be apprehensive of danger, cried out; and as the water then ran through the bottom of the chaise, they held their feet up against the front of it, to prevent their being wetted. Wills saw there was manifest danger: and if the carriage had been overfet, nothing less than a miracle could have saved their lives. "Lawson," said he, "let us save those poor girls from being drowned: follow me." He rushed down the hill swift as lightning, and, springing over the fence and a broad ditch, plunged into the water to the door of the chaise, which he instantly opened. Seizing the lady who was next to him, he desired her without ceremony to trust herself to him, which she did; and he soon conveyed her to dry land. He again returned, and desiring the next lady to make use of his arm, he took her, and soon placed her by her companion. Lawson, who was by this time at his back, took the other lady in his arms, and restored her in safety to her friends.

Wills was entirely engaged with his fair charge, whom he still held in his arms: for through extreme terror or apprehension,

she fainted away. And Wills, in his condition, dropping wet, was but badly qualified to hold her; but he could not for his soul think of parting with her from his embrace. She was, as were the other two ladies, in mourning, which only served to set off the transparent whiteness of her skin in a more advantageous manner. Her shape was exquisitely fine. Her limbs, which Wills, in the disorder he took her from the carriage, had an opportunity of observing, were formed in the most elegant proportion. Her snowy bosom, that rose tumultuously beneath the gauze that shadowed it, as she recovered, created unknown, and hitherto unexperienced transports in the breast of Wills. The ghastly paleness of death had spread over her countenance during her fit, from which she was soon recovered by the assiduities of her aunt and cousin, who were her companions. But when she opened her eyes, languid as they were from her illness, they shewed such glories to Wills, that he surrendered an heart, he could no longer maintain possession of, to her. When she came a little to herself, she gently disengaged herself from the arms of the stranger who held her.

The

The recollection of her situation with him, tinged her cheeks with a faint blush, and heightened those beauties that were but too powerful for him before. Mrs. Kelfal, for that was the aunt's name, was the first who was composed enough to return the gentlemen thanks for their humanity and bravery, in venturing their own lives for the preservation of theirs. Miss Harcourt, who was the lady that Wills took such a delight in beholding, joined in the compliment in so genteel and polite a manner, with such propriety and grace, that he conceived as good an opinion of her understanding, as he had expressed admiration at her beauty. His reply was such as contributed also to give her a favourable notion of her deliverer. "Humanity, Madam, first induced me to go to your assistance; and I am truly happy in having rescued so much beauty from any disaster. To effect it, I would risque my life at any time." While he spoke, she could not avoid taking notice of the person who addressed her. His figure, as the reader has been acquainted before, was such as might inspire love; and his eyes were animated with extraordinary vivacity, while he spoke to her. The other

ladies were paying at that time their compliments to Lawson, when Wills informed them that the carriage had passed the ford, and that he would conduct them through the fields to the road where they might rejoin it. At this time their servant on horseback came up, who had staid behind upon some occasion or other; and he was desired to follow the chaise, and prepare it for their reception, while they walked round.

Lawson took Mrs. Kelsal and her daughter under his protection, while Wills followed with Miss Harcourt, who expressed great fears for his health, in consequence of the wetting he had got, and begged him to go to some place where he might have an opportunity of drying himself, and not take the trouble to go along with them, who could get to the chaise very well. He assured her that he preferred her safety to his own health; and that he would rather spend those moments in her company, than procure his own convenience. "I shall part from you in a few minutes," "Madam," said he; "but I shall retain the remembrance of you while I exist: will

“will you favour me with your name, and
 “let me know where I may have the hap-
 “piness of seeing you again. Perhaps,
 “if you will permit me, I may have the
 “honour of assuring you of my affection
 “and passion.”

“I cannot refuse that small favour to a
 “gentleman who has rendered me so signal
 “a service. My name is Juliet Harcourt:
 “my father lives near Nantwich; and I
 “am sure he will be very glad to see a
 “gentleman who has saved his daughter’s
 “life.”

“Thanks, ten thousand thanks, for this
 “favour: but will you excuse my pre-
 “sumption, if I should ask you another
 “question. Is your heart or your hand
 “engaged, that, should I aspire at the ho-
 “nour of obtaining either, I might have
 “an equal chance of success with any body
 “else?”

“I will also answer that question,” re-
 plied the adorable Juliet, with a smile of
 ineffable complacency; “It is not.”

“May I be permitted to hope?”

“I shall be glad to see you, Sir, at
“Nantwich.”

They were now arrived at the carriage that was to separate them. Lawson had already put the two ladies in. Wills pressed Juliet's hand in his, while he stood waiting to perform the same office for her. She looked up to him, to return him thanks again for his kindness, and saw a tear stand in his eye: her speech was checked. She permitted him to hand her into the chaise, and he pulled off his hat and bowed to them, without speaking a word. They kissed their hands, as the post-boy, cracking his whip, drove off.

Wills pursued the carriage with his eyes: he was rooted to the spot on which he stood. Lawson spoke to him. His senses were too much absorbed, in thinking on the lovely object he had just parted from, to be able to attend to any thing else. His friend did not like standing still in his wet cloaths. Wills never felt the least inconvenience by it: Lawson, by giving him an
hearty

heartly shake, drew him from his reverie, which was very pleasing, and which good office he was not very thankful for. "What 'is the matter, Tom?"

"I am shivering with cold in my wet cloaths, while you are gaping after that chaise: I wish you would let us walk on to the top of the hill, to dry ourselves, and get a dram."

"I believe it will be necessary," replied Wills; "and I'll accompany you;" which he accordingly did.

But it is necessary to inform the reader, that the carriage that bore away his heart, had just sunk beneath a hill, and he lost sight of it; or else he would not have complied so readily with his companion's proposal of walking forward. They proceeded at a good round pace, and soon reached the house at the top of the hill, where they procured some refreshment; and having dried themselves, pursued their journey, without any other accident happening. But Wills's whole conversation turned on his charming Juliet: he indulged himself in the

the hopes of obtaining her hand, as he conjectured he was not disagreeable to her, from what she had said to him. He formed the most impracticable schemes, and entertained, at that moment, the most romantic notions, that ever enamorado harboured. Frequently did he demand Lawson's opinion of her, and ask him, if ever he had seen any thing half so lovely. It was in vain for him to say he had: for Wills found out new charms in her, every moment that he thought of her. They had, by this time, walked ten miles without ever stopping; and Lawson, who happened not to be so much struck with the lady whose deliverer he had been, began to feel a vulgar appetite, called hunger, grow very troublesome, and proposed to his fellow traveller to bait. This Wills was extremely indifferent about, till the other told him, it was absolutely necessary for his constitution, who was not in love, to satisfy his appetite with more substantial food than the thoughts of his mistress. They climbed up the hill to Highgate, and approaching one of those hospitable mansions which declare, by their signs that they afford entertainment for both
man

man and horse, some cold boiled beef was secured, of which they both eat very heartily: for Wills, though he never thought of the necessity of eating till he saw the beef, did not fail to shew the goodness of his appetite. This meal they washed down with humble porter, and, in a short time, arrived at their respective habitations: and when they had supped together, Lawson retired to take some rest after his walk; and Wills, when he went to bed could only think of his dear Juliet.

C H A P T E R XXIII.

WILLS's passion encreases. A letter. A strange resolution, and how put in execution.

WHEN he awoke in the morning, after sleeping very foundly, which is a great solecism in the conduct of a man in love, he began to recollect himself. He found the traces of the adventure of the preceding day still in his brain; and he was but too sensible, for his own peace, that the image of that charming girl was deeply

deeply engraven on his heart, and that she had already taken such an hold, that she could not be easily eradicated. The assurance that she had given him that she was not engaged, afforded him some hopes; but when he reflected on his present situation, they all died away. It was to be supposed that she was a girl of fortune, or family: in either case he could make no pretensions; if pecuniary qualifications were requisite. Then first it was, that he repined at his want of fortune, or thought his aunt used him ill. In the midst of these reflections, Lawson came in upon him, and joking him for being so lazy, Wills, to excuse himself, told him the subject of his contemplations. Lawson owned that she was a lovely creature, and flattered Wills highly, by telling him, that she seemed very well pleased with him. For three or four days Wills indulged himself in thinking on the beauteous object of his desires; but, at last, he began to wish to see her; to hear her speak; to know her sentiments concerning him: but how to effect this, was a matter not easily determined. Some days were also necessary to settle that. But he was interrupted by a letter

letter from Allen. It was addressed both to Wills and Lawfon, and ran thus:

“How comes it that footpads vile,
 “should dare to solicit the countenance
 “and correspondance of one infinitely su-
 “perior, one who has been so much ex-
 “alted above every traveller on the road,
 “[for I don’t find, that there was a pas-
 “senger in any of the waggons besides
 “myself] that they all looked up at him
 “with astonishment; one, who was con-
 “sidered as a superior kind of being at
 “every castle that was honoured with his
 “nocturnal residence. Can he degrade
 “himself so very low, as to hold commu-
 “nion with peripateticks base? Forbid it
 “dignity! Forbid it pride!”

“Hark ye, my worthy friends, this ex-
 “ordium, something in the manner and
 “style of my old friend ancient Pistol, was
 “conceived in my carriage, where the al-
 “titude of my situation inspired proportion-
 “ate ideas: but now that I am descended
 “from thence, my style shall tumble down
 “after me, whilst I, in humble phrase,
 “a round unvarnished tale deliver.

“When

“When I left you, my good lads, I
“mounted with an heavy heart; and, as I
“was never fond of indulging melancholy
“reflections, endeavoured to burry them in
“sleep: but this the noise and motion of
“the carriage forbad. Thus situated, I
“was dragged four and twenty miles in half
“the number of hours. At first, I imag-
“ined that the weight of my spirits re-
“tarded the progress of the vehicle, but I
“find I was mistaken; for, by the most
“accurate observation, it appears, that we
“have proceeded with the same exact de-
“gree of velocity all the way, though my
“spirits have become considerably lighter.
“I expected to have found an agreeable
“companion in my friend Robin the driver;
“but there I was mistaken too: he has not
“been guilty of one pleasantry since we met,
“except a certain facetious question he puts
“to me at least twenty times a day, viz.
“Pray, Sir, what o’clock was it, at this
“time yesterday? This, though hackneyed
“worse than the horse he rides, still affords
“him infinitely more satisfaction and enter-
“tainment than it does me, if I may judge
“from the immoderate laughter that accom-
“panies it.

“As

“As the occurrences of any one day will
 “give you a representation of the whole
 “journey, being invariably the same, take
 “the following. At two, three, or four
 “o’clock in the morning, I am called up,
 “when I generally begin the day with a
 “breach of my duty as a christian, discharg-
 “ing a volley of damns at the unfortunate
 “wight who disturbs me. We never stop
 “five minutes from the time we set out in
 “the morning, until we arrive at our inn
 “at night. This is attended with one good
 “consequence, namely, the saving of din-
 “ner; an expence that, in the present state
 “of my finances, would be intolerable:
 “but this loss is made up amply indeed at
 “supper, where, if we have not elegance
 “and delicacy, we have substantial plenty.
 “Certain buttocks and rumps of beef, huge
 “limbs of gigantic mutton, and sundry
 “dishes of divers kinds of garden stuff,
 “furnish out this nocturnal repast; which
 “we wash down with frequent potations of
 “ale. We all sup together with the family
 “of the house at seven o’clock; and till
 “nine the conversation is very brilliant, en-
 “livened with divers interludes of music
 “vocal. And here, to my great astonish-
 Vol. II. D “ment,

ment, I found, that a decent stroke of
smut [I might with propriety have said
indecent] gave no offence to my landla-
dy, her daughters, nieces, servant girls,
[maids I had almost said] their husbands,
sons, brothers, &c. Thus we spend the
day, Sirs; and the nights, the best way
we can. But let me tell you, this me-
thod being totally new to me, I don't
much relish it: wherefore I generally take
a stretch of three or four miles a-head, and
refresh myself with a meridian at some
good house, where I wait 'till I am over-
taken again. Here ends my journal: and
now, lads, prepare to hear something,
which, if it surprizes you as much as it
has me, will make ye stare. Know then,
that, to the eternal mortification of my
vanity, I have not been able — would ye
believe it? — to accomplish a single amour
the whole way. I depended upon some
assistance from Robin; but he is not one
of Dame Venus's votaries, and indeed if
he pays adoration to any deity whatever,
it is to Plutus. You cannot imagine how
this disappointment has lowered me in my
own opinion. I, who have been suc-
cessful with every rank and degree, from
nobili-

"nobility down to the lowest of the sex,
 "to be rejected with disdain by every little
 "country wench: insupportable! Pray hea-
 "ven that I may find my own country
 "lasses less cruel: if not, I don't know
 "what may be the consequence.

"As I have some paper, and a good deal
 "of time to spare to day, I think I cannot
 "employ them better than in telling Law-
 "son a story. An Englishman, a Scotch-
 "man, and an Irishman, travelling toge-
 "ther, a dispute arose which country pro-
 "duced the best poets: each strenuously
 "supported the superiority of his own.
 "The Englishman declared in favour of
 "one Mr. Milton; the Scotchman, of one
 "Mr. Allan Ramsay; and the Irishman, of
 "one Mr. Caroline's Devotions. After much
 "altercation, they agreed at last severally
 "to repeat an extempore stanza of their
 "own composing, and in that manner de-
 "cide it. The Englishman began,

Rejoice, Tom Hewit, rejoice
 And eke thou mayor of Coventree,
 For honest queen Beass
 Onze coom to this place
 For to zee wee.

"The Caledonian followed him.

As I cam past the pier o'Leith,
And through Edenbro'ugh toon,
Aw the lasses they did cry
The lorde be wi' you Andro!

“This [though last, not least] the Hi-
“bernian’s.”

When I lived in the county Mayo,
I courted young Sheelah Mc Dermot,
And she swore upon the book, I was the pret-
tyest young lad
That lived in the whole county or city of Cork.

“These I think three of the happiest
“specimens I ever met with, especially if
“the accent and manner peculiar to each
“be well preserved in the repetition. The
“controversy, however, was not yet de-
“cided, as no one would allow his to be
“inferior to the rest; they therefore re-
“solved unanimously to leave it to the de-
“cision of the first Welchman they met;
“but what the result of that was, I have
“never been able to discover. I know that
“Lawson boasts of having some of the
“blood of Cadwallader in his veins. I wish
“you

“you and he would lay your heads together,
 “and hammer out a sample of Welch ver-
 “sification to cut all three down.

Friday night.

“I have at last finished my journey,
 “*nunquam mihi obliviscendus*; *) and in the
 “intervals of my peregrination, I amused
 “myself, and endeavoured to divert you.
 “I am doubtful how I shall be received
 “by my father. As the prodigal son is
 “returned, I hope he'll kill a fatted calf.
 “In a day or two I shall see him. I know
 “you wish me success, and you shall hear
 “it. Yours, seperately and conjointly,

JOHN ALLEN.”

After indulging themselves in a hearty laugh at their friends epistle, and renewing their good wishes for his success, it came into Wills's head, that he might contrive to be conveyed in some such cheap and humorous manner into the neighbourhood of Miss Harcourt. He could not help communicating his notions to Lawson; who thought the scheme very feasible, and of-

D 3

ferred

*) Never to be forgotten by me.

ferred to accompany him, promising himself much diversion by putting it in execution. "Besides," added he, "you will be able to penetrate more into the reality of her sentiments concerning you, than if you went down in an equipage. Let us assume a character a little foreign to our own, and we shall see better how the land lies, than by appearing in any other manner." Lawson's approbation determined Wills; and how they proceeded, shall be treated of in the next chapter.

C H A P T E R XXIV.

A journey begun; its progress, and the adventures our heroes met with.

WILLS knew extremely well, that there was no possibility of undertaking this journey without a proper supply of money; and very judiciously considering that his living in a strange country would be expensive, he resolved to delay his expedition, till he received his supplies, which would happen in three weeks or thereabouts: then his half-year's payment beca-

became due. In the interim, his imagination was entirely filled with the idea of his dear Juliet: and frequent were the conferences he held with his trusty friend and ally, Lawson. In these, the whole plan was laid down, and many a charming scene presented itself to their lively imaginations. At length, the wish'd-for day, long expected, arrived. Wills received his five-and-twenty pounds, and Lawson had about five guineas. However, there were some trifles which it was absolutely necessary that Wills should pay, which reduced his stock to twenty pounds; they provided themselves with necessary linen, which they enclosed in a portmanteau common to them both, and took the precaution to send it by some of the stages which went part of the way, that they might meet it in a proper place again.

With a light heart and good spirits Wills set out, accompanied by his friend. He had already anticipated, in his enraptured imagination, the joy he should feel on the sight of his beloved Juliet. The thought winged his feet, and he walked so fast, that Lawson was obliged to call to him to

stop several times, before he heard him; so deeply was he engaged in thinking of his charmer. At last he heard, and complied with his friend's desire in slackening his pace; who assured him, though esteemed a good walker, he must decline going along with him, if he walked at such a rate. Wills, to make amends for his leaving him behind, acquainted him with the state of his thoughts at that moment, and the uneasiness and doubts he laboured under, as well concerning the reception he should meet with from her, as how he should be treated by her father: and Lawson not having heart any thing of his history, Wills related to him, without reserve, every particular of his life. He met a comforter in Lawson, who was much more sanguine in his temper than Wills. He prophesied that he would be again re-instated in his aunt's good graces; and did not doubt, but Mac Gregor was the man who informed Miss Kingley of his having raised the money. Wills seemed to think so too; but he could not conceive how it was possible for him to come at the knowledge of the transaction. His companion positively insisted, that it could be no body else

else. During this dispute, they arrived at the brook, now an inconsiderable stream, where Wills first saw his adorable Juliet. Here he stopped and indulged the most pleasing reveries; he also quitted the road, and went up into the path from whence he first beheld their distress. His imagination attentive to one object, represented the scene over again to him; and he saw, or thought he saw, the carriage in a like dangerous situation. As he kept his eyes fixed upon the spot, reviewing, in his mind's eye, the transactions that were passed, he was roused from his waking dream by a loud laugh. He returned his eyes to the spot whence the sound proceeded, and found Lawson amusing himself, by laughing heartily at his expence. This induced an enquiry of the cause of his mirth, which Lawson very honestly declared to be himself; and then, imitating the posture in which he stood fixed, and the looks he had assumed, he even forced a smile from Wills himself. "Well," said he, "though I confess my demeanour might have been very ridiculous, yet at that moment I experienced the most delightful sensations. Your bosom is a stranger to

“the most pleasing inhabitant that can dwell
“in it, pure and virtuous love. Tell me
“Lawson, do you know what love is?”

“Not *that* you talk of,” answered his friend.

“What other?”

“I can best explain that to you, by tel-
“ling my story. Not many months ago,
“as I was walking in the Park, a woman
“caught my eye: she was remarkably
“handsome, and finely shaped: I thought
“too, in my turn, that she did not ob-
“serve me with an eye of indifference;
“and I determined to find out where she
“lived. I followed her into one of the
“principal trading streets in the city, where
“I found her husband kept a large shop.
“I repassed the door soon after, but she
“was not to be seen. In the afternoon I
“returned, and she was standing in the
“shop. In I went, under pretence of
“cheapening some things. As her husband
“was not in the way, she assisted the per-
“son who stood behind the counter, and
“recommended some trifling things to me,
“which I took; however, in the choice
“of

“of them, I was engaged a long time,
“and made myself remarkable to her.
“The next day I saw her in the Park
“again, with another lady. Determined
“to address her, and conscious that by
“modesty alone I should not avail myself,
“I desired Allen, who was along with me,
“to fasten on the other; and I attached
“myself to the lady. The conversation at
“first was general; but my ally began to
“be particular, and gave me liberty to
“tell my Roxana what I felt for her; to
“assure her of the power of her charms;
“and in very passionate terms declared,
“that my life was dependent on her smiles.
“I met with a repulse, as I expected; but
“Lucretia could not have treated me with
“more haughty disdain, and exclaim against
“my presumption more than she did: and
“every attempt to deprecate her rage and
“anger was ineffectual. I attended her to
“the gate which led from the Park: and
“expressing a wish to meet her the next day,
“and taking leave of her in the most sub-
“missive manner, we parted; but she
“turned her head away, nor would she
“speak to, or even look at me. For all
“this, I did not give her over. Importu-
“nity

nity and opportunity succeed always with
the women: the former I determined
should not be wanting, however the latter was. For two days she did not make
her appearance in the Park; but I was
both evenings to be seen parading before
her windows, and always saw her. The
great number of people passing and re-
passing through the street continually,
prevented my being taken much notice
of: however, I did not escape her. The
next day she appeared again in the Park,
attended by her former companion. Allen
seized her as before, whilst I attempted
this impregnable fort. Again I told my
passion; again I was repulsed, with opprobrious terms. Her anger heightened
her charms, and her resistance made her
more desirable. When I found she would
not listen to a positive declaration of my
passion, I turned the discourse into a
more general channel; and then we all
partook of the conversation. It was not
displeasing to her; and for some weeks,
a long time I'll assure you, she held
out: but we met every day, and she
began to listen to me with more pleasure
than before. At last she consent-
ed

"ed to go on a party with me, a few
 "miles out of town. It was stipulated,
 "that Allen and her friend were to ac-
 "company us, to take of all suspicion.
 "The day was fixed, and away we went:
 "all was jollity and rapture. I could wish
 "for my own sake, more than hers, to
 "conceal the latter part of the adventure:
 "she had mercenary views in the appoint-
 "ment, mingled with a little desire. I
 "complied with her terms; and despising
 "her in my heart for selling herself, took
 "advantage of her ignorance of legal
 "forms; giving her nevertheless, all she
 "required from me, and she surrendered
 "herself up. We continued this inter-
 "course till she got a richer lover, or was
 "tired: and so, as we met we parted."

"And pray," said Wills, "how could
 "you have the assurance to address a mar-
 "ried woman, upon such a footing?"

"Very well: for there is always so-
 "me token of encouragement, or a man
 "would drop the pursuit that is fruitless.
 "Her tongue, at the moment she repulsed
 "me, belied her heart: and had she not
 "fold

“fold herself, which was really her intention, though not successful, I should have been fond of her still.”

“Good heavens!” exclaimed Wills, “can there be such woman? And she returned thus contaminated to her husband.”

“Aye to be sure,” replied Lawson, “and made him believe she was very fond of him.”

“This dreadful! But sure there are some good,” said Wills; “else why has nature implanted this desire of possessing women in our breasts? We naturally fly from a snake, and we dread that which is hurtful to us: yet can any thing be more destructive and obnoxious, than a woman who thus strays from her duty, and brings home pollution to her wretched husband’s arms, and destruction to his peace.”

“Truly,” said Lawson, “this is an ominous conversation to be commenced with a man who is deeply in love, and
“hasten-

"hastening into the trammels of matri-
 "mony as fast as he can; and especially
 "when argument and experience make both
 "so much against the fairer sex."

"I won't believe it," said Wills. "The
 "happiness that arises to us in this world
 "is much superior, and more plentifully
 "dealt out to us, than misery or misfor-
 "tunes: the latter we always make for
 "ourselves, the former is made for us.
 "We have it in our power to enjoy it if
 "we please: but we loath pleasure so eas-
 "ily procured, and take a great deal of
 "trouble to acquire woe and pain. — I
 "had rather

Exult in all the good of all mankind,

"than, by indulging a partial view, see
 "nothing but what should make me re-
 "pine at my state, and curse my existence.
 "We suffer enough from the infirmities
 "which the flesh is natural heir to, and
 "ought not to add a mental depravity to
 "the load. We should reconcile ourselves
 "as much as possible to this situation, by
 "receiving the agreeable part of it with
 "joy, and bearing the contrary with pa-
 "tience:

“tience: therefore, I cannot join with
“you, Lawfon, in your opinion. That
“there may be women who are bad, and,
“when so, are worse than men, from phy-
“sical reasons, I will not deny; but that
“the majority of them are so, I will ab-
“solutely contradict. The advocates on
“both sides the question make their own
“cases appear bright at the expence of
“truth.”

This, and similar conversation, brought them both very tired to the house where they were to sleep that night. As they travelled on foot, they put up at such houses on the road, [for though we have not hitherto mentioned it, they did not forget to eat and drink when impelled by hunger or thirst,] as best suited their appearance, and the manner in which they pursued their journey; it was therefore at a comfortable house, that promised good entertainment, they rested: nor were they deceived in their notions. The landlady, who was a very pretty, smart, neat, woman, took particular care of her guests, and prepared their supper with much alacrity and cleanliness: She also took care that

that they had clean sheets, and inspected the making of their beds herself, not trusting to her maids. The landlord, according to laudable custom, and for the better forwarding the consumption of liquor in his own house, not that he ever stinted himself any where, swallowed large potations of his own ale, on which he bestowed great, and we may justly add, many merited praises. The landlady was also requested to partake of a bowl of punch, with which they were solacing themselves. To this her husband objected: but was overruled by Lawson, who observed, that as there was no company in the house, she might favour them with her conversation for a little while. My good dame obeyed the message by the waiter, and instantly came to them. Lawson would not have strained his civility so far as to have both husband and wife at once, if he had not perceived certain indications from her behaviour, that she was not one of those hard-hearted females, who, like the heroines of old, would let a man hang or drown himself, before they would grant even a look to save him. Wills was too much engaged in the contemplation of his

amiable mistress, to perceive these diagnostics: or indeed, if he had, would he have taken any advantage of them: he, with an obstinate and foolish perseverance contending, that a man could never love a woman truly, who so far forgot her, as to admit another to his arms? Lawson had quite different notions, and began to rejoice at the opportunity that offered itself; and conceived very favourably of the issue of the adventure, when he found the landlord jealous of her, and averse to her coming into their company. These impediments encreased his desire of atchieving some exploits, and made him so earnest to have her introduced. He certainly, and we are sorry to say it, surveyed her with an eye of desire; and she, entirely regardless of his civilities, was captivated with Wills, whom she beheld with much pleasure. These looks, pro and con, did not escape the husband; who sat in a state of anxiety and suspense. Former transgressions had taught him the foible of his wife's constitution, and he watched her very narrowly. Lawson, though an handsome and agreeable man, was by no means comparable to Wills, and though the landlord

lord

lord was fearful of them both, yet the attention his wife paid to Wills alarmed him most. Lawson, who saw through his uneasiness, wanting to augment it, and finding that the grey mare was the better horse, and that he dare not say a word in her presence, paid her many compliments, and by appealing to Wills, forced him to join in her praise. This was very agreeable flattery to her, and she plumed herself upon it accordingly. The landlord who was ignorant where this extraordinary courtesy on both sides would end, and predicting that it foreboded him no good, knew not what to do. About this period the bowl was out, and Lawson hinted his desire to have some more. Wills would have excused himself. The landlord, who, at any other time, would not have waited for a second bidding, and whose interest and honour were at that time maintaining a strong combat in his bosom, advised the gentlemen to go to bed, as he was sure they must be fatigued after so long a walk, and that rest was most necessary for them. This disinterested declaration, so contrary to his usual practice, had so great merit in his own eyes, that he did not entertain

the least doubt but that it would be complied with; but how much was he surprized to hear his dearly-beloved wife recommend another bowl with great earnestness; telling him, at the same time, that a glass of hot punch would do the gentlemen a great deal of good, and make them sleep well. Lawson agreed with her in opinion: and Wills declared, in compliment to her prescription, he would take part of another bowl; but desired only half the quantity of the former to be made. "Well, my dear," said the wife to her husband, who was broiling with vexation, "do you go and make the punch." This was a motion he had not the least design to make. It would have been leaving the lamb with the wolf, the goose with the fox. "Go, make it yourself, since you would have it," replied he furily.

"I will, my dear," said the smiling dame; and out she tripped.

"You are very happy in a wife, landlord," said Wills.

"Yes,

“Yes Sir,” returned he, with some hesitation.

“Yes indeed,” added Lawson, “a very “pretty good kind of woman.”

“So so, so so, master; nobody knows “where the shoe pinches, but him that “wears it.”

“Why, you seem to live very happily “together?”

“Yes, happy enough, as a body may “say: to be sure we now and then have a “little ——”

Here was he interrupted by the entrance of his wife with the punch, and Lawson deprived of a very important discovery, as he imagined. But the landlord, as soon as he saw the bowl set on the table, exclaimed in a great fury, “Z—ds, what do “you call this, eighteenpennyworth? Why “it is as much as any three shillingsworth “I ever made in my life.”

“Hush, my dear,” replied the affectionate hostess, “you certainly mistake: “besides, you know, we are drinking along “with these gentlemen.”

And here we cannot help taking part with our host in this dispute: for it is a certain truth, that the good woman had replenished the bowl with a liberal hand, nor was she sparing in the ingredients; for our travellers bestowed many praises on it, and declared it was the best punch they ever tasted; and appealed to the landlord for his opinion. “Aye, aye,” said he, rubbing his forehead, “it is very good, “let us make haste and drink it.”

He followed that advice, and pushed the glass about as fast as he could; and truly rejoiced was he when he saw them go up stairs to bed.

They had paid their bill, that they might be ready to depart early in the morning; which they informed their landlord they intended to do. Lawson in vain attempted to get an opportunity to speak to the hostess; and she was as much chagrined

grined on the other side, to find Wills took no more notice of her. In this situation they parted; and there being two beds in the room designed for our travellers, they soon resigned themselves into the arms of sleep: nor do we find that Wills could keep his eyes open long enough to indulge himself to the extent of his wishes, in meditating on the charms of his Juliet; and however often she might return to his dreams, his waking thoughts were not much employed about her.

While they were enjoying from their labours above stairs, a quite contrary scene presented itself below. Mine hostes began [the charge: "Ah! you're a pretty, "sneaking fellow to be sure, when you "were drinking at the gentlemens cost, to "refuse to be your share, or to grumble "because I made the bowl a little larger: "I wonder some folks are not ashamed of "their behaviour."

"Aye, I wonder so too," replied the landlord; "for if I behaved as some folks "do, I should have cause to be ashamed."

“And pray,” said she, “how do they
“behave?”

“That doesn’t signify.”

“Yes, but it does; and you’re a sneak-
“ing pitiful fellow I say again, to be-
“grudge a drop——”

“Not such a fellow as yours there.
“You’d like such fellows, I fancy.”

“What’s the foolatum at now? What
“crotchet have you got in your noddle,
“eh? So a body mustn’t speak civility to
“a gentleman. Go to bed, do, you great
“oaf.”

“No, that I sha’n’t, till I please,”

“Well, do as you like.”

She busied herself about some trifles for
near an hour, and at last her husband fol-
lowed her up to bed. And though we
should be the first to condemn unreason-
able jealousy in any body, yet we cannot
help saying, there was some reason for our
host’s

host's taking such care of his wife. Indeed he hardly believed himself sure of her when he had her with him in bed. Possessed with these notions, and firmly convinced that she would go to the young strangers, his guests, the moment she found an opportunity, he determined to lie awake to watch her. He was not able to execute this scheme; for he fell asleep soon, overpowered by the liquor he had drank, and the toils of the day. But sleep did not afford him repose from his heated and jealous ideas. His active fancy presented the scene of his dishonour to him in a dream. He thought he saw his wife steal out of the room, and go to that where the objects of his fears lay. He rose in his sleep, and, opening the door of his chamber, made towards theirs. By the way he awoke, and so strongly was the dream impressed on his mind, that he still imagined himself pursuing his adulterous wife. He got into the room where our heroes, innocent of such criminal designs, were fast asleep. Doubtful, at first, which was the right bed, he approached the next to him, and groping about with his hands, touched Wills's smooth face,

and feeling his hair loose, was sure he had found his wife. "Ah! you vile strumpet," exclaimed he, "have I got you at last;" and giving Wills's hair a pull, he awoke. "Yes you jade, you outswore me about the Captain, but now I have caught you;" and giving another pull, Wills, who did not like such treatment, gave him such a blow in the pit of the stomach, that sent him some paces backwards; and in his retreat encountering a chair, he tumbled over it, roaring out murder as loud as he could bawl. Wills called out thieves and demanded assistance. Lawson, though fast asleep, was roused by this unusual outcry; and demanding the cause of it, Wills informed him, that a thief, he imagined, had caught hold of his hair, and was dragging him out of bed, as he believed, when he awoke, and knocked him down. "There may be more in the room," added he, "so take care." Lawson started out of bed, and the first step he made was on the prostrate carcase of the unfortunate landlord. "Here's one of them," said Lawson.

"Secure him," said Wills, "'till we get lights, and assistance."

Law-

Lawson, to keep him fast, knelt upon the fallen foe to prevent his rising; who, feeling such an unusual weight, roared out more violently than ever. This outcry did not fail to answer the purpose for which it was designed, and the men and women servants belonging to the inn rushed promiscuously into the room, and without staying to cloath themselves. But the evil was not remedied, for yet no light appeared. At last, the gleam of a candle shone forth, and soon after my landlady approached this scene of confusion. She demanded what was the matter; when Wills told her he had been assaulted by some robber, as he apprehended, while asleep, and whom Lawson had secured: so, taking the candle from her, went to see whom they had got, when, to their utter astonishment, they beheld the face of their landlord. The servants skulked off to bed when they saw nobody else, and left them to settle the matter by themselves. For a time they were silent from surprize, till Wills demanded of him what was the reason of such treatment.

“Ah!

“Ah! Sir,” said he, “that traitress is
“the reason of it; she’ll be the death of
“me at last. I was sure she came here,
“and I followed her, and am sufficiently
“punished for it, for I have broke some
“of my ribs.”

“It is no matter if your neck was broke,
“you jealous-pated fool. And was this a
“cause for disturbing these gentlemen? I
“shall be ruined and beggared by you;
“nobody will come near the house. Oh
“my dear Sir,” said she, addressing her-
self to Wills, “impute not this to me.
“Indeed, Sir, I am as innocent as the
“child unborn. But this is the way he
“always uses me. Why don’t you down
“of your knees, and ask the gentleman’s
“pardon?”

“No, no,” said Wills, “I am sorry
“for the mistake that has happened, and
“beg we may not be disturbed again.”

That she very devoutly assured him he
should not; so sending her husband out
before her, she wished them a good night,
and left them to their repose: where we
shall

shall leave them also for a while, and shall not recount the abuse she bestowed on her unfortunate husband, which she stiled a curtain-lecture.

CHAPTER XXV.

The journey continued. An ale-house scene, and a person whom they met there, introduced.

IN the morning early they arose, and going down stairs, found the courteous landlady risen, and ready to receive them; which she did, with many apologies for the treatment they had met with; entreating them to excuse it, and begging, if they came that way again, not to let what had happened prevent their favouring her with their good company: and as they had risen so soon, insisted upon their taking some rum and milk which she had prepared, and was then ready for them. Wills at first refused, but, taking example by Lawson, who drank heartily of the cordial beverage, and being over-persuaded by the good woman, who enumerated the evils

evils that frequently were occasioned by going into the cold with an empty stomach, he partook of it. Every attempt to pay her for it, she resisted very strenuously; and hoping to see them soon again, she curtsied lowly at the door as they took their leave of her.

When they had gone some distance from the house, Wills observed, that he had been in many places with his friend Brewer, when they travelled in a like manner, without meeting such an example of spontaneous civility. "And indeed," said he, "she seems to be a very good-natured woman; and the thankfulness she expresses towards her guests, who spent so mere a trifle with her as we did, must make her very noted, and procure her much custom."

"And pray Wills," said Lawson, "do you think it merely on the score of our custom, that she was so extremely civil?"

"I do, indeed."

"But

"But I know to the contrary; and if
 "she had been as civil to me as she would
 "fain have been to you, the husband
 "should have had something more than
 "suspicions to have been troublesome for.
 "Ah, Frank, I cannot believe all that sim-
 "plicity and carelessness unaffected. 'Tis
 "true, you might just now have been en-
 "gaged with the thoughts of Miss Har-
 "court; but your deepest rivers are al-
 "ways silent, and the still low sucks all
 "the draught. You modest fellows do
 "more mischief, than a whole regiment
 "of such ratling blockheads as I am.
 "Now don't you think our landlady very
 "handsome?"

"I believe she was: and indeed, as you
 "supposed, I was too intent on contriv-
 "ing how I shall come at Juliet, to take
 "particular notice of her. But if my ideas
 "had been totally disengaged from any
 "other person, I never should have con-
 "sidered her as an object of desire; and
 "instead of encouraging, I should have
 "repressed every sentiment that tended
 "that way."

"So

“So, if she had been extremely kind
“to you, and wished you to be so to her,
“nay, told you so, you would have re-
“jected her?”

“Most undoubtedly. Because she would
“have had me been guilty of a crime, is
“that a reason I am to commit it? What
“thorns should I have planted in that
“man’s breast; and a poor excuse it would
“have been for me, to have said to the
“husband, I have made you miserable it
“is true; but your wife tempted me.
“How should I, in a similar situation,
“admit the force of such an excuse my-
“self? You may laugh, Lawson, but I
“would not do such a thing.”

“Well, Wills, I should like to trust
“my wife with you, if I were sure of your
“always retaining such sentiments; but
“all flesh is frail. In truth, whenever I
“marry, which I don’t believe will be
“soon, I shall take proper care of my
“wife.”

“And make yourself as ridiculous as
“our jealous landlord did. Guilt is al-
“ways

“ways suspicious; and a man who has injured others, is always afraid of being injured himself. You’ll have occasion to change your sentiments one day or another.”

“Aye, and so will you perhaps; however, I hope not.”

In friendly intercourse of sentiment did they pass the day. The conversation of a companion shortens a long road: but it is delightful to have that companion a friend, to whom you can unburthen your heart. As they had found themselves better able to push forward this day than the former; they passed through the town where they intended at first to have lain, and walked on, as it was too early to put up for the night. They had already entered upon a large common, and beguiled the time with chatting on their situation, and the scheme they were to pursue, when they found night stealing on them very fast, and themselves in the middle of a wild heath, where they could perceive no house. They began to look about them, as it was rather disagreeable to be benighted; but not being weary,

they determined to walk on till they reached some place of entertainment. They accordingly trudged on for near five miles further, before they saw any thing like a human habitation. At last Wills perceived a light at a distance, which he imagined to be a sign of some house, and they accordingly made towards it. They were not deceived. It was a little alehouse on the edge of this common, near a small church. As they approached it, they heard the sound of different voices; and, willing to know what was the subject of their discourse, listened a little to hear it. A female voice demanded, "Now won't you, John, won't you marry me then?" To which a voice, harsh and loud, replied, "Aye, damme, must he, or go to jail, so let'un take his choice."

"If matrimony is the only harm we have to fear in this house," said Wills, "we may venture in." So, rapping at the door, and having declared themselves friends, and behighted strangers, they were admitted. But the scene that was presented to their sight beggars all description.

Next

Next the door, in a large elbow chair, was placed a farmer, who though the chair was very capacious, could scarcely be contained in it, to such a size had he grown: a happy resemblance of the barrel he so often drank from. Round his waist went a large rope, which was fastened to the body and arms of a good likely young fellow, who was seated beyond him next the wall, and from thence it was conveyed to the back and one of the elbows of his chair: so that they were bound very securely together. Behind his chair stood a girl, wiping her eyes, in the posture of Grief. In the corner of the chimney sat an elderly man with a mug in his hand, which he seemed to pay great attention to.

The entrance of our travellers caused a general silence: and they having demanded, in the most courteous terms, if they could have a draught of beer, the old woman, who was landlady, answered in the affirmative; and chairs were procured for them. The fat farmer himself lamented that it was not in his power to accommodate them with his great chair;

“But, really,” said he, “I cannot untie
“myself.” This civility induced them to
ask the reason of this extraordinary appear-
ance; and he directly informed them,
that he was overseer of the poor in that
parish; and that the girl behind him, whom
they saw crying, was of the same parish;
and that the young fellow, who was a
smith in one of the neighbouring parishes,
had got her with child; and she having
sworn that he was the father of it, he
had apprehended him, either to make him
give security for the maintenance of the
child, or else to marry the girl, and take
her home to his own parish, and so rid
them of the burden: “And so,” said he,
“I had a great deal of trouble in look-
“ing after this young man; and having
“caught him at last, as I am very lame
“of one leg, I am afraid he will run away
“from me again, and then I shall lose
“him entirely; so, you see, I have con-
“trived to fasten him here to me: and if
“he runs away with me and my chair, I
“will forgive him.”

“Really,” said Lawson, “that is total-
“ly impossible, if Samson or Topham does
“not

“not come among us to assist him; but,
 “pray, what do you intend to do with
 “him?”

“Why, I shall stay up here all night
 “with him; and in the morning the par-
 “son will come here, and they shall be
 “married; for the church is but a stone’s
 “throw off.”

“If he has deluded her with a pro-
 “mise of marriage,” said Wills, “I think
 “it is only justice that he should be com-
 “pelled to make her that reparation.”

“Yes, indeed, Sir, he did,” replied
 the girl sobbing: “you know you did,
 “when you robbed me of my virtue,
 “John: now speak the truth.”

“Ay, indeed, so it is, Sir, the only
 “repetition, as you say,” added the over-
 feer; “and if a don’t, a goes to jail as
 “sure as the devil’s in London.”

“They should send me to jail then, or
 “to the devil,” replied the stranger in the
 corner, “before I would consent to marry

“her, for the sake of any parish, or any
“overseer.”

“Zaunds,” quoth the overseer, in a great fury, and exalting his voice, naturally loud; “I wish I was a justice of the peace, or a churchwarden at least, that I might put thee in the stocks for thy impudence. How canst thee have the face to advice this honest man here not to marry the wench? Thee deserv’st to be lick’d within an inch of thy life, a dog, thee dost.”

“Don’t be faucy, friend,” replied the stranger; “I shall fall foul of you if you are; I shall give you a drubbing.”

“If thee dost,” said the girl, “I’ll scratch thee eyes out. What hast thee to say to it, thou great chuckleheaded dolt?”

“Let un, let un touch me, if he dares: I’ll ha him by the heels to-morrow morning for’t: a wants to let this man escape.”

“You’re

“You’re more afraid than hurt,” added the stranger; “I sha’n’t touch you, so sit quiet.”

And now this dispute was obliged to be postponed; for our landlady was making way for herself to dress some bacon and eggs for our adventurers supper; and by that means the disputants were obliged to be silent. In the mean time, Lawson handed them his beer; and they drank very sociably all together, except the stranger in the corner, who drank from his own mug, and always remembered the healths of Lawson and Wills.

In a little time their supper was dressed; and, having in vain invited the company to partake of it, they fell to with wonderful appetite, and made great dispatch in the devouring it. But what to do for a bed, they knew not. This they were soon supplied with, by the old woman’s offering to sit up with her neighbours, and yield her bed to them; which she furnished with clean sheets for the purpose. And now our travellers were refreshed, their spirits were lighter, and they

all made a social circle round the fire, in the kitchen, or parlour, or by whatever title you choose to distinguish it; being the only room in the house fit to receive company. The poor weeping girl sat next her intended spouse on one side; and the overseer, to whom and his chair he was inseparably fastened for that night, on the other. The landlady sat by Molly's side; the stranger kept his corner; and Wills and Lawton filled up the vacant space. As the ale went round, the spirits of the company became exhilarated, and they seemed all well disposed to be social, except the young smith, who still kept a sullen silence; and the girl, who, taking his hand in hers, looked up to his face with tearful eyes; "Now, do, John; won't you marry me; "now do, dear, good John, say you "wull."

"I suppose," said the overseer, "he has "taken the sulks, because of what that "busy-body meddling fellow there has been "saying. 'Od rot 'un! but I'll ha' un before his betters to-morrow, that shall "make 'un speak with the devil to 'un, I "warrant."

"Why

“Why, truly,” replied the stranger in the corner, “if my persuasions would avail, “or would he follow my advice, there “should be no force or punishment powerful enough to compel me to marry “her. Suppose he runs away the moment “he marries her?”

“Why then,” replied the parish officer, “she’ll be made an honest woman of, and “our parish will be rid of the burden. And “when once the ceremony is over, he may “go to old Nick, an he wull.”

“I thought so,” said the stranger; “and “this you call executing the law. So is “hanging: and a man had better be hang- “ed, than marry a woman he don’t like, “or, indeed, marry at all.”

“Pray, Sir,” said Wills, “whence “arises this aversion to matrimony?”

“From my own feelings.”

“Oh, I beg pardon, Sir,” said Wills; “I did not ask the question with a view of “penetrating into your private affairs. But

“may not you mistake the matter, and
“shew only the worst side of the picture?
“I suppose, young man,” continued he,
turning to the smith, “that when you first
“addressed this girl, you had some incli-
“nation, some fondness for her. It is also
“to be supposed, that you made use of
“every art in your power to render your-
“self agreeable to her, and to make her
“love you. It is not to be imagined that
“you courted her with a design only of
“debauching her, of robbing her of her
“innocence; at least, whatever your inten-
“tion might be, you did not confess it
“openly; for then, surely, she would have
“shunned you, and never suffered you to
“pursue your villanous schemes. It is not
“natural to imagine, that she so far over-
“came the modesty of her sex, as to turn
“suitor to you. It must then have been
“under false pretences, under a delusive
“and feigned character, you ruined her.
“You pretended to be true and honest, and
“to seek her in the lawful and honourable
“state of matrimony, when really you had
“no such intention in your heart: there-
“fore, you have been guilty of the great-
“est injustice, and in my opinion, of ab-
solute

“solute robbery. Suppose a man whom
“you knew to be your neighbour, and of
“whom you had reason to entertain a good
“opinion for his honesty and the upright-
“ness of his dealings, was to come to you,
“and ask you to lend him money, or tools,
“or a sheep, promising, at the very same
“time, to restore it punctually to you, or
“make you reparation and amends for it
“in such manner as you should suffer no
“loss: yet should he, as soon as ever he
“obtained what he wanted from you, run
“away, and leave you to seek your remedy
“as you could, would you not call him a
“rogue and a robber? yet there might be
“some amends made you; and, though
“you were hurt by the loss, would not
“be ruined. In how much worse light is
“your treatment of this poor girl to be
“respected? You have robbed her, and
“shame is her portion. The unpitying
“world, which always condemns the un-
“fortunate, will reproach her; whilst your
“conscience will eternally sting you. It
“does not appear to me, that you deny
“that you promised her marriage, or that
“you accuse her of any crime: therefore,
“if you have any honesty remaining, you
“will,

“will, by making her your wife, wipe off
“the stain you have thrown upon her.
“This compulsion you suffer now, is but
“the consequence of human laws enforcing
“justice: there will be another place, mo-
“re awful and terrible, where you must,
“some time or another, answer for your
“breach of promises, and your conduct,
“to that wretched girl, and her more mi-
“serable offspring.”

He ceased, and a universal silence prevailed. Lawson though he did not entirely agree with his friend, yet, out of respect to him, restrained himself from giving his opinion. The two women looked on him as an angel: and the overseer who little expected to hear such sentiments from a young man who was not a parson, was astonished. The stranger groaned, and the poor girl sobbed and wept plentifully, during the address. The young smith was not unaffected; he held his head down, buried in thought: “Well, John,” said Molly, “d’ye hear what the young gentleman says? Now you know it is all
“truth; do you now,—do marry me.”

“Well,

“Well, Molly,” said he, “if it will
“make you any satisfaction, I wull.”

“You wull!” replied the astonished
overseer; “that’s a good lad.”

“Yes,” says he, “I wull, but thee
“coudn’t ha’ made me do it: that young
“gentleman has shew’d me I am a rogue,
“and I was always counted an honest lad
“before.”

He could not contain himself any longer, and he blubbered aloud. The girl ran to Wills, and, falling on her knees, thanked him in the most grateful terms she could express herself. He raised her up, and bade her go to her husband, which she obeyed; and embracing one another, their tumults soon subsided, and peace returned.

“Well” said the overseer, “I do not
“believe our parson would have made ’un
“do this in a week, now: but since it is
“so, I will give thee a guinea, John, and
“half a crown to buy thee a dinner.”

“And

“And I,” said Wills: “will add another to it. And now, my good lad, follow your trade, and I have no doubt but you will have a good wife in her: and when you are convinced how happy you will be in doing your duty, am sure you will make her a good husband too.”

So saying, he deposited the guinea in the overseer's hands, who, at his request, released him from his confinement. The young fellow returned him thanks for his kindness, which he promised not to forget; “and never,” said he, “till this moment, did I imagine there was any harm in kissing a girl.”

“No, nor I either,” said the overseer, “when the parish is freed; I have kissed many one in my time myself: but as for other mens wives, I never took much delight in 'em.”

Wills could not help smiling at the farmer's moderation; and calling for more ale, circulated the mug, happy in restoring peace and harmony.

“Well,

“Well, Sir,” said the stranger in the corner, “you certainly have a great deal of merit for doing this, because you think it is for the good and happiness of them both that it should be done: but if you knew as much of the world as I do, you would find it otherwise. Whatever my sentiments may be, I shall not disclose them here, lest I should destroy the work you have so much to your own satisfaction concluded.”

“You must have some very strong reasons for arguing thus, Sir,” said Lawson, whose curiosity was excited by this conversation.

“I have indeed.”

“You seem to be a traveller too,” said Wills.

“I am, Sir.”

“And which way do you go?”

“I shall go beyond Coventry.”

“We

“We are going that way too, and
“shall be glad to bear you company.”

He was pleased at the offer, and they
settled the time of their departure in the
morning.

They went to bed, and our two friends
were obliged to sleep together. In the
morning when they awoke, they found the
parties all fast asleep round the expiring
fire; when having waked them, and wished
all happiness to the couple that were to be
married, they departed, attended by the
blessings and good wishes of the whole
company they left behind them.

C H A P T E R XXVI.

The journey continued. The stranger's history begun.

AS they pursued their way, their conversation naturally turned upon the adventures of the preceding night; and Lawson, in hopes of urging the stranger to assign his reasons for opposing matrimony so earnestly, and at the same time declaring in part his own private opinion, asked Wills, how he could be instrumental in making that poor fellow unhappy by forcing him to marry that wench? "As
"for my part," said he, "I could never
"imagine that a woman who had once
"granted me a favour, could refuse it to
"any body else." The stranger joined him; and they were strongly opposed by Wills. This dispute lasted till they came to the place where they thought it necessary, and by the demands of their stomachs for food, absolutely incumbent on them to breakfast. Having dispatched that important affair, they proceeded for some time without speaking a word. At length the stran-

ger broke silence, and addressed Wills thus: "You seem to me, Sir, to act from principle; you do not deviate this morning from your sentiments of last night; therefore I suppose you must be astonished at hearing my opinion concerning marriage, and so strongly opposing the match concluded by you then. You are a very young man, and from what I have seen, have but little experience; therefore I will endeavour to instruct you by the misfortunes which I brought on myself, chiefly. It is an history I have never yet told to any body, nor should I relate it now, but that I am going to quit the world, and shall bury myself in obscurity. It is very irksome to me to tell it: the recollection of my guilty misconduct will crimson my cheeks with blood, drawn from my heart. I shall relate the facts as they happened in order of time, tho' they did not come to my knowledge for some years after."

"My name is Perkins, and I am a native of Warwickshire. To the place of my birth am I now retiring. My father, who had a good many children, was

“was a substantial farmer, and gave us
“the best education he could afford. I
“was taught to read; and taking much
“delight in the mathematics, during the
“time I was kept at school, improved my-
“self very much, and made a great pro-
“ficiency in them. When I was about
“fifteen, my father sent me up to Lon-
“don, where I was bound apprentice to
“a genteel trade. Being of an amorous
“complexion, and meeting with very few
“difficulties in indulging my favourite pur-
“suits, I became an adept in the myste-
“ries of the fair sex. The little allowance
“that was remitted me from the country
“kept me in cloaths to appear genteely
“for one in my station, and to my own
“address I trusted for every thing else:
“nor was I ever without money, for I
“was the favourite of many during the
“time of my apprenticeship: and expe-
“riencing such sweets from so early a com-
“merce with the sex; I reserved myself
“for them, and never descended to that
“class which so often occasions the destruc-
“tion of many unhappy wretches. My
“servitude expired, and a woman with a
“sum of money, larger than I had any

“reason to expect, for I got nothing from
“my father, took a fancy to me, and I,
“to secure her fortune, married her. We
“lived together for some years very hap-
“pily, and I had several children by her,
“who all died in their infancy. She was
“much older than me, yet she always be-
“haved herself like a good wife as far as
“ever I knew.”

“In the street where I had my shop,
“and within two doors of me, lived one
“Garton, who was of the same trade; and
“though we both had a great deal of bu-
“siness, yet we always looked on each
“other with a jealous eye, and were con-
“sidered as rivals in trade by the neigh-
“bourhood. Garton had two daughters:
“the eldest was at home with him, the
“younger was abroad for the benefit of
“her education. With him also lived a
“niece, who acted as upper servant in the
“family. Though Garton and I were not
“as intimate and sociable as neighbours
“generally are, yet the women used to
“visit backwards and forwards with my
“wife, and preserved a correspondence;
“and as I used to scrape a little on the
“fiddle,

“fiddle, and was merry and sprightly, the
“daughter and niece used to come frequent-
“ly into my shop, and we became very
“familiar. Well acquainted with the sex,
“I soon perceived that they were both
“comeatable; and I determined to have
“them. Opportunity first served with the
“niece, who happened to come in when
“my wife was abroad: I soon prevailed
“with her; and she proved with child in
“a little time. Miss Garton, whose name
“was Betty, a desirable little girl, and,
“as I well knew, not very difficult of
“access, was the next I fixed my eye on:
“and I was encouraged to hope for suc-
“cess, from some anecdotes I knew of her.
“A neighbour, who observed an officer
“who lodged in Garton’s house taking so-
“me liberties with his daughter that were
“not consistent with strict modesty, in-
“formed the father of it: who instantly
“dismissed his lodger. A young ho-
“selle succeeded in her affection: and I used
“my endeavours to obtain a place in them
“also. I was not unsuccessful; but the
“niece, watchful of all my motions, per-
“ceived my intentions, and acquainted her
“cousin with her situation, and bade her

“be cautious of me. This availed very
“little; and I believe only did me service
“with Betty, who soon after surrendered
“to me. For a couple of months this in-
“tercourse was carried on without the
“least apprehensions of a discovery, and I
“used to lie in Garton’s house with his
“daughter almost every night. At length
“a watchman, who stood opposite his door,
“perceiving me go into his house so fre-
“quently, imagined it could be with no
“good design; and one night, as old Gar-
“ton was coming home, informed him of
“the whole affair; and told him, that I was
“then in the house. Inflamed with rage,
“he fastened the door, lest I should make
“my escape; and rushing into the room
“where I was encircled in his daughter’s
“arms, woke me from my slumbers; and
“I perceived the enraged father standing at
“the bedside with a pistol in his hand. I
“started up; and he presenting the pistol,
“told me I was a dead man, if I attempt-
“ed any violence, or resistance. He ad-
“ded, that he had been informed of the
“criminal intercourse I carried on with his
“daughter and was determined to have sa-
“tisfaction of me; And as you are a mar-
“ried

"ried man," said he, I will wipe out the
 "disgrace of my family in your blood.
 "My fears, for I knew him to be a man
 "of a resolute and inflexible temper, in-
 "spired me with a scheme to prevent his
 "wreaking his vengeance on me. I will
 "do her every justice in my power, said
 "I, and will marry her directly."

"What! are you not married already?"

"I affirmed I was not; and that the
 "woman I had so long lived with was
 "not my wife, though she passed for such.
 "Without scrutinizing too strictly into the
 "matter, glad to get his daughter off his
 "hands, he took me at my word, and in-
 "sisting on the performance of my pro-
 "mise in the morning, he left us together,
 "after locking the chamber door, lest I
 "should give him the slip. In the morn-
 "ing he came to me: every thing proper
 "was prepared, and his daughter became
 "Mrs. Perkins. As I was tolerably well
 "in the world, I had a house at some
 "distance from my former habitation, and
 "there I took my new bride. I had now
 "two wives, and difficult was the task to

“reconcile myself to the first. However,
“I knew her moderation, and was sure
“she loved me so well that she could
“never be persuaded to hurt me. When
“the first transports of her rage and sur-
“prize had subsided, I went to her; and
“after bearing patiently her first accusa-
“tions, we at last settled matters, and
“lived upon the best footing possible, con-
“sidering the situation of affairs. Soon
“after we were married, my new wife
“proved with child; and as I had set up
“the public business, her sister Diana, who
“was returned to her father’s, came to
“assist her during her pregnancy. I had
“given up to my former wife all my stock
“in trade, which she knew how to ma-
“nage very well; and constantly went to
“see her, which she seemed tolerably well
“pleased with, and matters went on very
“peaceably and quietly for a time.”

Here, having approached the place where they proposed to dine, Perkins postponed the sequel of his history. And whilst our travellers are taking some rest, we shall afford some to our readers, by concluding this chapter.

C H A P T E R XXVII.

*In which PERKINS concludes his history,
and our travellers their journey.*

WHEN dinner was ended, they again pursued their journey, and Perkins resumed his history.

“My wife’s sister Diana was about nine-
“teen, handsome, lively, and of a warm
“constitution. She was frequently at our
“house, and I could not help loving her.
“This I imagine she perceived, nor was
“she offended at it: No unpromising symp-
“tom for me. In the mean time, my wife
“was brought to bed of a fine boy, which
“I firmly believe was my own. We had
“lived upon a very good footing ever sin-
“ce we had been married: and though I
“had two wives, there was no complaint.
“But about this time my first wife died,
“and I was free from any prosecution for
“bigamy. Soon after my second wife had
“got about again, I found her sister Diana
“as compliant to my desires as I could
“have wished her. We enjoyed true plea-
G 5 “sure

“sure for a while in each others arms:
“and then first I knew from her, that my
“wife’s uncle had been fond of her long
“before I married her, and it was sup-
“posed had received every mark of fond-
“ness from her that a man could obtain
“from a woman. This shocked me much.
“I had observed him coming about the
“house when she was very big with child:
“and now she was about again, he renew-
“ed his visits, which were very frequent.
“I determined to watch them, and found
“that I had not been deceived in the re-
“presentation which had been made to me.
“My wife proved again with child; and,
“what was more distressing, Diana com-
“municated her situation to me at the
“same time; and entreated me, in the most
“earnest manner, to save her from the
“shame that would attend the public knowl-
“edge of her having a criminal intercourse
“with her sister’s husband. I made a spee-
“dy determination. There was but one
“road open for me; and that was to fly.
“I collected all the money I could, near
“two hundred pounds, and with my ever-
“beloved little girl, I set off. As I was
“sure her father’s vengeance, and my wi-
“fe’s

"fe's rage, would pursue me through this
 "kingdom, I went to another, and chang-
 "ed my name. One friend only I trust-
 "ed with the secret of my residence; and
 "he, from time to time, informed me of
 "their proceedings. There were rewards
 "offered in the public papers for bringing
 "back Diana, and giving information of
 "me: but I eluded their search, for I was
 "in a place where English newspapers ne-
 "ver came. I also found, though I had
 "left my wife well stocked with every
 "thing, that she sold all, and retired to
 "her father's, where she endeavoured to
 "run me in debt as much as ever she
 "could: but being aware of this, I return-
 "ed to England, and took the benefit of
 "an act of grace as a fugitive, without
 "their knowledge: and then Diana and I
 "determined to remain in England, which
 "we did; and setting up the public busi-
 "ness for her, which she managed with
 "great cleverness, I betook myself to
 "my own trade, and we did very well
 "together."

"Not long after this, old Garton died,
 "and left all his property among his child-
 "ren

“ren: but the fear of a discovery pre-
“vented our claiming Diana’s proportion.
“My friend also died about this time, and
“I remained in ignorance of every trans-
“action relating to them. For many years
“Diana lived with me; and I believe, in
“all that time, she never was guilty of
“the least breach of her fidelity. And of
“seven children we had, not one survived.
“We eluded every enquiry that was made
“after us, and lived only for each other.
“That happiness at last ended, for my
“dear Diana died. When curiosity im-
“pelled me to search after my wife, and
“finding some people that knew the fami-
“ly, learned, that her uncle, who also
“died soon after her father, had bequeath-
“ed a very considerable sum to her and
“the child she had soon after my flight
“with her sister, and which both he and
“I had every reason in the world to be-
“lieve was his own; that soon after this
“money had fallen to her, she took a lik-
“ing to one Mr. O’Kelly, an Irish chair-
“man, and that she lived with him: that
“they had set up a public house upon the
“strength of her fortune; but that though
“she was beat and used very ill by him,
“she

“she was fond of him. I learned also,
“that my eldest boy was dead: and hap-
“py I thought myself, that my poor child
“was taken away from this wicked world,
“and the tyranny of a mother who so
“little regarded him. But though I blam-
“ed her, my heart pitied her sufferings,
“and I was resolved to take her home to
“me again, if she was willing to go with
“me: I therefore went to some common
“friends both of hers and mine. They
“had long given me up as dead, and
“were as much surprised to see me, as if
“I had actually risen from the grave.
“When their astonishment had abated, I
“related every circumstance of the death
“of Diana, and what had befallen me sin-
“ce I first absconded. They in their turns,
“informed me of the cruel usage my wife
“met with from O’Kelly; and that she had
“been with them but two or three days
“before, making her complaint, and la-
“menting the loss of me, who had ever
“behaved very kindly to her. I confessed
“I should be glad to see her, and that
“every thing that had passed should be
“buried in oblivion, as well on my side
“as hers. This, they said they were sure
“would

“would be complied with: and I promised
“to call again in a few days to know
“the result. When I went again, she was
“there, prepared to meet me. After our
“first embraces were over, I told her how
“glad I was to see her. We have both
“been guilty, Betty, said I: let that be
“forgotten for ever. Let us go together
“if you are willing, weep over our past
“offences, and merit forgiveness for them
“by repentance. She replied in the most
“endearing manner, that it was the wish
“of her heart, to do so: that her past
“conduct was now most odious in her
“eyes, and she longed for nothing more
“than to forsake those ways. I believed
“her. She quitted O’Kelly, and we went
“together. But though her apparent re-
“pentance might have been sincere, yet it
“came into my head that O’Kelly might
“follow her, and, as she loved him, he
“might prevail on her to quit me, and
“go away with him again. Women though
“they complain, are like spaniels; and
“seldom hate a man for using them ill,
“as they call it. My heart foreboded that
“she was not entirely weaned from him;
“and lest he should come after her, I did
“not

“not take her directly to my own house,
“which remained an entire secret to her,
“but brought her to a lodging I had hir-
“ed at a very remote part of the town
“from her former habitation. Here she
“remained with me about four days, and
“behaved as well as woman could do.
“Some business calling me out one morn-
“ing that would detain me all day, I
“desired she would not wait dinner for
“me. In the evening I returned, intend-
“ing, if she had continued only for a
“fortnight to behave well and be recon-
“ciled to her situation, to have taken her
“down to my house in the country: but
“when I heard she had gone out in the
“morning soon after me, and had not yet
“returned, I imagined something more
“than ordinary had happened. She knew
“that I had received seventy guineas a
“few days before, which were in my
“desk. I took out the key from my poc-
“ket with a design to open the bureau,
“to see if it was safe; but she had saved
“me that trouble, it was broke open,
“and all the money gone. I did not ac-
“cuse her; on the contrary, I congratulat-
“ed myself that the loss was not greater,
“and

“and that the pernicious consequences of
“taking her down to my country house
“were by this means avoided, which would
“have been my ruin. There was no other
“way left, but to let her follow the bent
“of her own inclinations: for it was soon
“known, that she had returned immedia-
“tely with my spoils to O’Kelly. I the-
“refore converted every thing I had in
“the world into money, and am now
“going to die in the place where I first
“drew breath. Comfortless, solitary, and
“wretched, am I now going to finish an
“unhappy life. I know not whether any
“of my relations are alive, or if they will
“acknowledge me. Without a child, to
“be the comfort of my declining years;
“without a wife, who would make me
“pass the remnant of my days with more
“comfort than I shall now find; without
“even a friend, shall I drag on a wretched
“existence, till heaven, pacified by my
“repentance and sufferings, shall call me
“to a welcome grave. Learn from me,
“young men, that a life of guilt termin-
“ates in misery.”

He

He ceased. Wills shuddered with horror at his situation: and even Lawson was affected. They maintained a long silence, each employed in thinking on Perkins's history. He, unhappy man, seemed overwhelmed with the remembrance of his past misdeeds, which filled him with shame and grief. They had little communication together for a great way, till they came to a bye road, which turned off from that which they pursued. "Here, gentlemen," said Perkins, "I must take my leave of you: this way leads to the village where my friends did live. I shall reach it to morrow morning. Here then, I must bid you farewell, for ever. Let my example deter you from the paths of vice, however alluring or tempting." They both shook hands with him, and, wishing him all happiness, they parted.

"Have mercy on him gracious heaven," said Wills: "pity his sufferings, and calm his disturbed spirit." Lawson seconded him in his prayer, but could not help observing to Wills, that the women were the most guilty through his whole history;

and that it made good his argument. Wills with his accustomed humanity, hoped the best; and contended for it, that mankind in general were infinitely better and more virtuous, than our passions, partiality, and prejudice would permit us to allow. This argument lasted them to the end of their journey, which they finished on the second night after they had parted with Perkins: and right glad were they, to find themselves safely arrived at Nantwich, though they were exceedingly tired with their last day's walk. Wills, however forgot his fatigue in the reflection, that he was so much nearer his beloved Juliet: and Lawson was very glad to find himself at the end of his journey.

CHAPTER XVIII.

*In which the reader is informed of the
steps Wills took to see Juliet, and their
success.*

AFTER indulging themselves longer than usual in the morning, they arose: though we must confess, with our usual impartiality, that Wills forced his friend Lawson out of bed, who got up but very unwillingly. While they were at breakfast, they made enquiries about the gentlemen in the neighbourhood; and, among them, Mr. Harcourt's name was mentioned. "Lord," says my landlord, "he's a main lucky man: there was no less than three lives here t'other day between him and his brother's fortune and title, and 'tis but last week that the last o' them died and he has it all."

“That’s lucky indeed! and where does
“he live pray, friend?”

“A matter o’ fix mile from hence, as
“you turn on your right hand, just as

H 2

you

“you go out o’ the town; its a main fine
“house, and a hugeous monstros park to
“it. And there be a pack o’houses, a
“little village just before you come to
“the door of the park.”

This was enough for Wills, who did not chuse to be too particular in his enquiries, lest he should give ground for suspicion. As they had dressed themselves remarkably plain, they appeared more like two farmers sons in their bettermost cloaths, than what they really were. Away went Wills, upborne on the wings of love and desire, to follow the road which he had been directed to. Lawfon panted after, and was obliged to hail him, before he could make him stop that he might overtake him. “Really,” said Lawfon, “you
“were in such a hurry, that one would
“imagine I was your rival, and going to
“woo your mistress too, and he that ran
“fastest was to have her.”

“Why truly,” replied Wills, “I was
“in haste.”

“Then

“Then I presume you are going to
“her father, and intend to demand her at
“once.”

“What put that in your head?” said
Wills; “I wish to heaven it was in my
“power, or that he would give her to
“me.”

“Perhaps,” said Lawson, “this addi-
“tion of fortune and title may make him
“humble and tractable, and he may be
“willing to give his daughter, who can be
“no inconsiderable heiress, to the first
“handsome young fellow that asks him
“for her.”

“I should be of a contrary opinion.
“Wealth and rank seldom encrease a man’s
“humility.”

“So I think,” said Lawson: “but I
“should imagine you thought otherwise,
“by your being in such a hurry. Your
“ablest generals always *reconnoitre* the
“ground before they draw out their forces
“in battle array; and we should know the
“disposition of the enemy, before we be-
“gin the attack.”

“You speak in parables,” said Wills;
“explain yourself.”

“That I will. In my opinion, it
“is rather odd for a young fellow with
“only fifty pounds a year in his pos-
“sion, to go and ask a man to give
“him his daughter, who, perhaps, has
“as many hundreds; and that, too, with-
“out knowing whether the girl has any
“inclination for him, or of what kind
“of stuff the father is made. Now
“my advice is, that we learn how Miss
“Juliet stands affected, if possible, befo-
“re we open our trenches, and besiege
“the town. If we can bribe, by soft
“looks, fervent sighs, or any of these
“current bank bills of love, some of the
“inhabitants within to capitulate upon
“honourable terms, the day will be our
“own.”

“Thou speakest like an oracle, Tom;
“but still there is one objection. Will it
“not be very dishonourable to endeavour
“to gain the dear girl’s affections, with-
“out her father’s consent?”

“And

“And won’t it be very ridiculous to
“ask his consent, be denied, and lose her
“for ever, by that means. But now we
“are all in the dark: let us learn where
“we are, before we proceed any further.”

They began to perceive the village, by this time, that their landlord had described to them: a little distance on the hill was the casket that contained the jewel, dearer to Wills than all the earth, which was only Mr. Harcourt’s house, surrounded with a beautiful park. On one side rose the humble spire of a country church, which opposed its whiteness to the dark shade of a thick wood, whose lofty trees towered above it. Wills stopped to admire the scene, which was rendered delightful to him by its being the dwelling of his Juliet. The prospect alone pleased Lawson, who could not avoid confessing it was fine. The little village lay in a valley, between two gently rising hills; they accordingly descended to it, and every step that Wills advanced, his heart increased its palpitation. At the foot, and on the other side of the bridge, which was thrown over a little stream that ran through this valley,

was a public house, distinguished by the sign of the White Hart; not but that it is supposed the painter designed to have drawn a four footed beast; when desired to paint a White Hart, or whether he knew no better; but certain it is, that the device on the sign was in shape like those harts painted on cards, but with this difference, that it was of a white colour. As this was the only house of entertainment in the place, they were obliged to go in; not before Lawson had predicted that they should be but poorly received there. Wills told him, that trusting to appearances was very fallacious: and they entered the hospitable dome. They were received by an old man whose hair was white with age; and whom they conjectured, from the blue apron that he wore, was the landlord. They were not mistaken: and a very pretty smart girl that attended in the capacity of servant, was, as they afterwards learned, his daughter. They were shewn into a little parlour, very clean and neat, which bespoke the housewifery of the inhabitants of the house. The old man was very industrious in supplying his guests with what they called
for;

for; and they begged he would partake of their liquor. In the course of some trifling questions they asked the old man, they found him the *narrator temporis acti*, and as communicative as they could wish him. They praised the neatness of his house: and Lawson, who managed the enquiry, asked if that young woman was his wife. "No, Sir," said the old man, smiling, "she is much better, she is my daughter; I have but her, and one boy in the world. To be sure he has been wild, but he is now settled I hope. My wife, who has been dead about seven years, was a very good woman: and if she had lived, I believe, I never should have left Sir Lionel Harcourt's house."

"Where does he live?" said Lawson: for Wills, whose faculties were all absorbed in attention, had not power to ask a question.

"Lord, Sir, don't you know Sir Lionel's house?"

"No, we are but strangers."

“Aye, you must be strangers, indeed,
“not to know that: ’tis the great house
“on the hill here.”

“I thought that was Mr. Harcourt’s.”

“Aye, there’s the mistake now. Why,
“it was but the week before last that his
“elder brother died, and he became Sir
“Lionel. Though there were two boys,
“as sweet children as ever the sun shone
“upon, and they died about a month ago
“of the small pox, because the father
“wou’dn’t oculte them; at least, so the
“doctor said: and the poor gentleman
“grieved so after his sons that he broke
“his heart; a good and a worthy gentle-
“man he was.”

“And has Sir Lionel any children?”

“Yes, he has two daughters: one of
“them has been married, about three years,
“to a squire in the neighbourhood she
“don’t like much, and a good young lady
“she was: but the youngest, Miss Juliet,
“she is worshipped like an angel by every
“body about here. So good, so affable,
“so

“so sweet tempered, and so handsome;
 “lord, she comes here very often to see
 “my poor girl who was bred up with her,
 “they were play-fellows ever since they
 “were in the cradle; though my Nancy
 “is a year older than her, being twenty
 “last Lammas day.”

Wills's perturbations at this account are
 not easily to be described. He thought she
 was coming in every moment: and fre-
 quently turned his eyes to the door, to
 see if she did not approach, which he
 dreaded, at the same time he wished it.
 Lawson, perceiving him very uneasy,
 kept up the conversation with the old
 man; and, by dint of questioning him,
 learned the following account of Sir Lio-
 nel Harcourt.

“He was the younger son of a good
 “family, the elder branch of which were
 “in possession of the title he then enjoy-
 “ed. That having a very small fortune,
 “he did not know what to betake him-
 “self to; and, being of an haughty and
 “imperious temper, to which was added
 “a great share of furliness and ill-nature,
 “he

“he was hated by the country people,
“who in general are fond of the young-
“er brothers, as they are the prettier
“gentlemen; but it was the reverse with
“him. That about five and twenty years
“ago, lady Betty Clinton, with whom
“he had lived as butler and steward for
“above fifteen years before, came down
“to that part of the country to take pos-
“session of an estate that was left her.
“She was young, a widow, and tolera-
“bly handsome; but a woman of a mild
“and sweet temper. While she was in
“the country she chanced to see Mr. Har-
“court, who really possessed a great deal
“of personal beauty: she was struck with
“him; and he was not long before he per-
“ceived it. As he was insolent and severe
“to those below him, so was he fawning
“to those above him. This pretended hu-
“mility fixed Lady Betty’s affection, and
“in a short time she married him; and a
“good fortune she was. She had above
“nine hundred pounds a year, and twen-
“ty thousand pounds in money. How-
“ever, there were five thousand pounds
“apiece settled upon all the girls, inde-
“pendent of the father. The younger
“boys

“boys were also provided for: but they
“had only these two girls in the five years
“she lived with him; for she found too
“late, poor lady, that happiness did not
“consist in beauty; and his temper, natu-
“rally bad, was made worse by not hav-
“ing a son to inherit his estate, and
“especially as it was limited to her child-
“ren. She broke her heart. It was his
“usage of her made her ill first, and en-
“creased her sickness afterwards. He kept
“himself unmarried, and turned his whole
“thoughts upon encreasing his fortune,
“which, with the late addition to it, is
“now very considerable; and the servants
“say,” continued the old man, “that his
“pride and severity are greater since this
“late title has fallen to him, than before.
“About three years ago he forced his eld-
“est daughter, who was called Betsey, after
“her mother, to marry a neighbouring
“squire, who is like himself: and as for
“Miss Juliet, he had like to have lost her
“a little while ago, as she was coming
“from London; for it seems the floods
“were out, and she had like to be drown-
“ed, but for a young man who ran into
“the water to save her. If he was to
“be

“be known here, the people would make a holiday for him, she is so beloved. I hear that it is rumoured in the family, that there is a lord whose wife is lately dead that has made proposals for her, and is to visit her very soon.”

Wills changed colour at this information; and his concern was very apparent to Lawson, who still kept up the conversation with the old man, who was very fond of shewing his knowledge. He asked him how long he had left Sir Lionel's family, and for what.

“After my wife's death,” said he, “I found myself less inclinable to put up with the bad usage I received from him; and having saved a little money in the family, I left him, and applied to the justices for a licence; which they would have granted me, but Sir Lionel opposed it; however, at last, as I bore a good character, they gave me one, and I just make both ends meet; and what I am worth, will go between my daughter and the boy.

This

This was the sum total of what they learned from the old man: and as this took up some time, they dined with him and his daughter, who was very well pleased with her guests; and, in particular, fixed her eye upon Wills, whom she could not help admiring. His unaffected civility, the result of his natural complacency of temper, made her look on him in the most amiable light. She joined her father in Juliet's praise: it was adding fuel to the fire in Wills's bosom, which there was no occasion to do. When they had dined, and rewarded their host, [not too liberally, lest the people should imagine they were not what they appeared to be] they strolled towards the house; Wills indulging the most romantic notions. They saw no appearance of any female, and they sauntered along the park wall which bordered on the road. Wills had gained considerably on his friend, and left him some paces behind: but something having struck Lawson that he wanted to shew him, he called out, "Holla, Wills." At that instant a genteel young man, decently dressed, and mounted on a very good horse, hearing Lawson call his friend,

friend,

friend, stopped directly; and, looking very attentively at him, begged him to inform him what o'clock it was, as his watch was out of repair. Wills, immediately pulling out his watch, told him it was a quarter after three. "Sir, I thank you," said the stranger; and, turning his horse's head about, exclaimed, loud enough for them to hear him, "It must be him!" and rode off as fast as he could.

Our travellers stood looking at each other, in silent wonder, for some moments. It was evident that Wills was the person whom the stranger meant: and when he could speak, he declared, he had never seen him before. "That is something extraordinary," said Lawson; "for I am sure he knows you. Perhaps it is the footman who was with the carriage when you first saw Miss Harcourt."

"No, that it is not," said Wills; "I remember his face very well."

"But

“But it does signify,” added Lawson, “who it is; if he knows us, we shall be “blown, and Sir Lionel will treat us but “very scurvily, when he comes to hear of “our design. We had better return, and “consult what is to be done.”

That Wills objected to, till he had walked a little further, and made more observations. The place was too dear to him, to be induced to quit it easily. Lawson yielded to him; and it being a solitary place, and a bye road, they met no other person, till they returned to the White Hart again.

C H A P T E R XXIX.

*In which the plan of operation is settled.
An interview. A great discovery, and
the consequence of it; being full of bu-
siness.*

THEY just called in at their old man's to wish him a good night, as they passed by, and then pursued the road to Nantwich. Lawson perceived more difficulties in the prosecution of this scheme, than Wills was either aware of, or would suffer himself to think on. However, the communications of his friend's apprehensions upon this occasion, did not serve to make Wills easy, though it opened his eyes. Lawson very justly concluded, that Sir Lionel would jump at this alliance with quality. It would flatter his pride and vanity too much to be rejected, and that his daughter's approbation or dislike would be very little regarded upon the occasion: therefore he held it most prudent, to endeavour to secure Juliet's affection, and especially as she had an independent fortune though a small one, and nothing like

like what she might expect if she married with her father's consent. Wills, though he did not approve this advice, as it might lead her into an act of disobedience, if he was so happy to please her, would have acted in another manner if he could: but as he knew Lawson was more versed in the ways of the world than himself, and had more experience, he submitted to his opinion, and agreed, that they should endeavour to see Juliet, and try what effect his prudence would have on her. "At any rate," said Lawson, "if she likes you, it will prevent her from yielding to her father's commands, to marry this nobleman, which she might otherwise be induced to do, if she had no other object that her heart was fixed upon." Wills allowed the justice of the observation, and determined to go to church the next Sunday, where he made no doubt but he should see her. This was the Friday evening, and an whole day must necessarily elapse, before he could have a chance of seeing her: that day was spent too, like the former, in melancholy reflections. He never regretted the loss of the prospect of his aunt's fortune, till he found he run a

chance of losing the girl whom he had unalterably fixed his heart upon. He was sad and dejected; and all Lawson's endeavours to inspire him with cheerfulness, were ineffectual. At length Sunday morning arrived, and he went, with anxious impatience and a fluttering heart, towards Pine-hill, the place of Sir Lionel's residence. Lawson, whose intriguing spirit was delighted at the thoughts of laying schemes, projecting castles in the air, running away with a damsel, or storming a chamber window, was amusing himself very agreeably during the walk, by thrusting himself and his friend into difficulties, and then extricating themselves again. Indeed he had traced, in his fertile imagination, a most extraordinary set of adventures, which he made no doubt would be the consequence of this amour. He had laid it down as a self-evident truth, that no girl who had eyes, could refuse Wills's addresses. He well knew the power a handsome young fellow has over a woman, and especially when he had rendered her any service. They were both so much taken up with their own thoughts, that they held very little conversation with one another.

another on the road, till they came to the spot where they had the first view of the church. Here Wills stopped. "Now, Lawson, I shall know my doom: I shall be able to perceive whether Juliet is pleased to see me, or not; and then if this person, whoever he is, that so unfortunately knows me, should discover me here, I shall be entirely prohibited from the sight of her, by her father's severity."

"What a cowardly fellow thou art, Wills! Never fear her, she won't eat you. See her, see her, man: I'll engage we shall succeed."

Lawson's being so sanguine gave him some encouragement, and they took the path that led to the church. They did not arrive till the service was near beginning; and not being inclined to saunter in the churchyard, they passed through the rows of the peasants and farmers who stood on each side the door, not without undergoing a strict scrutiny. The clerk very civilly put them into a good seat, where Wills sat silent, and trembling. The bell

ceasing, the noise of the people coming into church, induced Wills to stand up; and the first object that struck his eyes was his beloved Juliet, more lovely, more charming than ever, followed by her father. Their seat was not far distant from that in which he was placed. His eyes were fastened on her: not a motion, not a look escaped him. The elegance of her shape, and the dignity of her deportment, that he had not so good an opportunity of contemplating before, added fresh rivets to his chains. As yet she had not lifted up her eyes from her private devotions, on entering the church; but the moment she did, they were fixed upon him. A blush spread instantaneously over her lovely face and bosom; but it was as soon succeeded by a pallid whiteness, that shewed her surprise and her feelings. She was obliged to sit down. Wills, at that moment, suffered more, if possible, than she did; and especially when, looking about, he perceived the young man who had accosted him on the road two days before, with his eyes stedfastly fixed on him. He sat down to avoid his observation; and, till he was obliged to stand up, by the beginning

ginning of the service, he remained in a state truly pitiable. He felt for Juliet strongly, and wished he had not appeared so suddenly before her. Then this man's knowledge of him! Every thing distracted him, and he knew not how to construe her surprise at seeing him. Lawson, who had already settled the matter, conceived a very good consequence from it; though she never once turned her eyes towards the place where he sat during the whole remainder of the service. When it was ended, all the congregation waited for Sir Lionel and his daughter to go out. As they went towards the door, she stole a look at Wills, in which he could not perceive the least spark of resentment, or anger. It was not lost upon Lawson, who took very good notice of it. Wills remained some time in the church, after they departed: and the stranger staid also. This gave Wills much uneasiness; but how to avoid him, he knew not: he fauntered in the church-yard, looking at the grave-stones: but still he hovered round him at a distance. Wills found it impossible to escape him: and he and Lawson took their way down to the public-house in the vil-

lage, where they intended to dine. The old man was glad to see his company again, and welkomed them very heartily. They asked him what he had for dinner. There was a piece of boil'd beef in the pot ready, and he hoped they would partake with him. They complied with his invitation. They sat down, and Lawson, who was very happy in the prospect of his friend's affairs coming to a fortunate conclusion, eat very heartily, but Wills had no appetite: the sight of Juliet was too much for him for that day; and though pressed by Nanny, who asked him frequently if he did not like his dinner, and offered to get him any thing else that he did, yet he declined every thing in the most obliging manner, and poor Nanny was much vexed at seeing him refuse to eat. They had scarce finished their dinner, when the young man came in whom Wills had endeavoured to shun. The moment he saw him, urged by some extraordinary impulse, he started up, and changed colour. His imagination was so prepossessed with the evils that would happen to Juliet in case he should be known, and his design discovered, that he could not

not help testifying this involuntary mark of surprise, at the sight of the only man in that part of the world that could betray him. "Sit still, Sir; sit still," said Johnson, for so was the old man called, "this is only my son Bob, I told you of:" but turning to his son to speak to him, he saw his face overspread with a deadly paleness, and every mark of horror in his countenance. Nanny, screamed out, and ran to assist her brother. When he recovered, he said, he was suddenly taken ill, but that it was over now; and they resumed their chairs again. Wills could not help looking very earnestly at young Johnson, which seemed to increase his confusion. At last, he begged the favour to speak to Wills in private. "By all means," replied Wills; and they walked out together into the garden. "Sir," said Johnson, "I hope you will excuse my presumption. I only beg leave to ask you one question: Do you know me?"

"No, indeed," answered Wills; "I don't recollect ever to have seen you before. But I have the same question to ask you."

“Ah! Sir,” said he, “I have the greatest reason to know you, who have been my best benefactor.”

“I never saw you, before you spoke to me the other day: then how can I have been of service to you?”

“Sir,” replied he, looking about him, and lowering his voice, “do you remember your rescuing a gentleman from the hands of some robbers; your offering a guinea to them, and their refusing it.”

“I do, very well, and was much surprised at it.”

“Then, Sir, I am that unfortunate man who spoke to you: and hearing your name mentioned the other day, I was struck with it: and remembering your voice perfectly well, though I could not recollect your figure or person, it being dark, I asked you that question, to be assured of it. And now, Sir, I have explained to you my knowledge of you, wishing and hoping it may be in my power

“power to return you any service for the
“great kindness you shewed me.”

“The first I require of you,” said Wills,
“is not to tell my name, or seem to
“know me.”

“I shall not, Sir.”

“I should also be glad to know,” said
Wills, “how you came into that dread-
“ful situation in which I first found you.”

“I can refuse to tell you nothing, Sir,”
replied Johnson; the story is but short.
“I had connexions with a girl here, who
“had nearly been my ruin: I have not,
“however, the sin of seducing her to
“answer for. At that time I lived with
“Sir Lionel Harcourt’s land-steward, to
“learn his business, as I was promised the
“place upon his death: for my father and
“mother were old standers in the family.
“Soon after I kept this girl company, I
“found that it was taken notice of, and
“I had several quarrels with the person
“whom I was assistant to, for neglecting
“my business. My father and mother,
“who

“who knew my attachment to this girl,
“used to chide me, and set before me the
“bad consequences of my living with her:
“but I would attend to nothing: so, to
“remove myself from hearing constantly
“what was so very disagreeable to me,
“and she telling me she was with child,
“and I dreading the discovery, proposed
“to her to go to London with me, which
“she most readily and willingly consent-
“ed to. I gathered up all the little mo-
“ney I could lay my hands on, and out
“we set, without giving any body the least
“notice. I was a stranger in London, but
“she was not: she had acquaintance with
“some unfortunate women like herself,
“and I was introduced to them and their
“husbands, as they called them. In riot-
“ing and merriment, the little money I
“had was soon expended: and what to do
“to procure more, I knew not. Among
“the men to whom I had been introduced,
“and indeed with whom I consoled, were
“several who used to make a practice of
“robbing on the highway: by this means
“they had always money. It was pro-
“posed to me to recruit myself in like
“manner: but I declined it with horror.
“To

“To live in poverty with me, did not
“suit my girl: she reproached me with
“want of spirit, and upbraided me for
“the evils I brought on her. I could not
“bear this: and determined to brave every
“thing, to procure what she wanted.
“The first night we set out, we had but
“bad fortune. The way to destruction is
“broad and easy, and vice soon becomes
“habitual. The second night I had not
“so much repugnance to go on the road,
“and had better success: my share of that
“night’s spoil, amounted to five pounds.
“When I went home, she congratulated
“me on my success: and boasted of her
“having been the means of putting me in
“a way of getting money so easily. The
“third night was that in which I met
“with you: we had robbed a gentleman
“of three guineas, I had taken the money,
“and had it in my pocket, when you
“knocked me and my companion down;
“the other deserted us. Little did I ex-
“pect such lenity: but the reproof sunk
“deep into my heart, and I was not so
“hardened, but I felt the force and truth
“of it. When we quitted you, and went
“off, I determined to forsake my companions
“and

“and the town at once. I told the man
“that was with me, that it would be
“suspicious for us to go into town toge-
“ther, and that we had better separate,
“and meet at the rendezvous at the ap-
“pointed hour. He accordingly went
“one way, and I another: and I made
“directly for the road that led homewards.
“I travelled all night: and by the help of
“a returned post-chaise or two, proceeded
“a great way in my journey. How did
“I rejoice at escaping from the punishment
“my crimes deserved! How much did I
“commend my own resolution, in not
“going back to see the woman who intro-
“duced me into the road of destruction. I
“might have been seduced by her wiles,
“and prevailed on by her blandishments,
“to have returned to the same dreadful
“course. On the second night I rested:
“but my sleep was broken and disturbed
“by the most horrid dreams. I rose by
“the first dawn of the morning; and the
“farther I went from the detested scene
“of my guilt, the happier I was. At
“length I reached home, and was receiv-
“ed kindly. The steward being dead, I
“am in possession of his place: and hope
“that

“that my offences are forgotten and forgiven both by God and man.”

“I have no doubt but they are,” said Wills, “if you have truly repented of them. I am glad to see you restored to peace and happiness.”

“You were the cause, and you have the merit of it. But pray, Sir, will you excuse me, if I ask you what business brought you down here in this dress, which I am sure is not fitting for you.”

“A cause, that I cannot reveal.”

“Can I serve you, Sir? Will you give me leave to guess at the cause? Pray, did not you rescue Miss Juliet Harcourt from imminent danger, some time ago?”

“How did you come to the knowledge of that?” said Wills, starting, and looking angrily.

“Don’t be offended, Sir: I imagine it must be you, by the description she has very often given to my sister of your
“per-

“person: and if I can judge from your
“looks in church this day, it was she
“who was the occasion of your coming to
“this part of the country.”

“Friend” replied Wills, “cease your
“surmises.”

“I will, Sir; but my life is devoted
“to your service; make use of it.”

“You judge but too truly, Johnson,”
said Wills with a sigh: “I will trust you,
“and will not entertain a doubt of your
“fidelity. I doat on her to distraction; my
“life is wrapped up in her, and I would
“venture a thousand deaths to serve her:
“but I would not cause her any uneasi-
“ness from her father on my account, for
“the universe: tell me, if you know
“whether the sweet girl is disengaged.”

Johnson told him he believed she was
as yet; but heard something of a Lord
who was to pay his addresses to her soon:
“However, if you have a message or a
“letter to send her, I will deliver it to
“her. We have been children together,
“and

“and her affability and good nature make
“her the idol of the whole country.”

“But” said Wills, “if it should be
“known to Sir Lionel that you have acted
“in this manner, will not he take your
“place from you?”

“Fear not,” said he; “it will never
“come to his knowledge. I will run any
“risque to serve you: and if your bashful-
“ness should prevent you, I will venture
“to tell her your errand here.

“Well,” said he, “I will employ you:
“let us step into your father’s, and there
“I will write to her.”

In the way to the house, Johnson in-
formed him, that Sir Lionel’s estate amount-
ed now to above four thousand a year;
that his daughters would have all his for-
tune, and Juliet, who was his favourite,
the greater share of it. He then launch-
ed forth in her praise, enumerated her
many good qualities, and her superior ac-
complishments; tho’ there was no sort of
occasion for this, as Wills’s passion did

not stand in need of any augmentation. Before he went into the house, he told Johnson that it would be very prudent to conceal the cause of their knowledge from his father and sister, which was agreed to for the present; "but I shall acquaint them with it before you go," said he, "and in the mean time shall tell them you are my best friend, and insist upon their silence in regard to you."

When they entered, they found Lawson and the old man in deep conversation. The subject was Miss Harcourt, whom they informed him had been there the day before; and also acquainted him, that the aunt and cousin were gone back to London, as it was to visit them she went there, and they returned into the country with her. Lawson had been amusing the old man, during Wills's absence, with a story of their intention to take a farm in the neighbourhood; and he recommended his son Bob, as a good judge of land, to assist them: but when they entered this was put an end to; and Bob, calling his father into the parlour with Wills, informed him he was a gentleman to whom he was under

der the greatest of all obligations, and desired him to treat him accordingly and for his life not to mention a syllable of it. He promised very faithfully to be silent. Wills then calling in Lawson, informed him what a friend he had found in this young man; and writing materials being prepared, he sat down to form the letter. But this was by no means an easy task: and while he is puzzling his brain how he shall address the fair object of his desires, Lawson and Bob having left him to himself, we shall follow them, and take the opportunity of concluding this chapter.

CHAPTER XXX.

A view of the inside of the house at Pinehill: a letter, and its effects.

LAWSON, when he got Bob out of the hearing of the house, began to ask him many questions about Juliet; for it never once entered his head to enquire how his acquaintance with Wills commenced; that was very indifferent to him, so he could render his friend any service. For true it is, that Lawson had the sincerest friendship for Wills; but, at the same time, thought him very ridiculous in some things; and he looked on his conduct, in others, to set him above the ordinary race of mortals. Johnson, finding him to be Wills's particular and intimate confidant in this affair, answered all his questions with the greatest readiness; and added some circumstances which she had mentioned, concerning the person who rushed into the water to rescue her, so favourably, that it contributed to keep up Lawson's spirits upon the occasion. This, however, they both agreed not to tell the lover,

er, lest there might be a disappointment, and it would look as if Johnson wanted to curry favour with him. They then returned to Wills, who had, by this time, finished his letter, and was sealing it as they came in. Johnson told him, that he should have an answer to-morrow evening, and should expect to meet him at his father's. They then parted: Wills and Lawson went to their habitation, and Johnson returned to Pinehill. "Heaven," said Wills, when he got to the summit of the hill, "Heaven be witness, I could stay here only to look at the house that contains my Juliet. My imagination would trace her through all the different amusements of the day; would attend her like a guardian spirit, warding off all mischief and evil, and showering down peace and comfort continually on her."

"Upon my word," said Lawson, "you sentimental lovers are a very rational, agreeable set of beings: but you enjoy all the pleasure yourselves."

"That I believe," replied Wills; "but we can communicate it to others, if they are not insensible."

“Yes, I suppose so—to the objects of
“your affections.”

“To the most indifferent persons in
“the world,” said Wills, walking on, “if
“they have not lost all sense. For instance;
“I’ll engage the author of the *Man of Feel-*
“*ing*, with whom, by the bye, I had
“rather be acquainted, than the first Peer
“in the land, experienced all the pleasu-
“res and pains attendant on the most de-
“licate and refined passion, which you may
“call sentimental, if you please. If he had
“not, he could never have affected his
“readers so much. I only speak for my-
“self. When I read it, there were some
“sounds, that my heart was then in uni-
“son to, and they vibrated together; con-
“sequently I received more pleasure than
“any body else, that had not the same
“sensations, could possibly do. If poor
“Brewer had been alive, he would have
“admired those precepts of humanity and
“general benevolence that are so strongly
“inculcated in it, and have found out the
“author. One thing I am sure of, that
“he must have been in love, and I fear
“his passion was hopeless: It may be my
“own case soon.”

Law-

Lawson, still earnest in persuading him that he was agreeable in Miss Harcourt's eyes, would not suffer him to indulge so melancholy a reflection.

We shall therefore leave him thus employed, and follow Johnson to Pine-hill. But first, it will be necessary to inform our readers how Juliet stood affected. It may be imagined, from the conversation that passed between Wills and her while he was accompanying her to the chariot, that she did not look upon him in a disagreeable light; and her good opinion of him was increased by the praises her aunt and cousin bestowed upon him during the remainder of the journey. The truth is, that she could not help wishing that he would put his promise in execution, of coming to see her, though she had no sort of opinion that he would be as well received as she wished he should be by her father. When the story was related to him, he commended the young fellow's spirit greatly; and, as he was very fond of his daughter, would have rewarded him, just at that moment, handsomely: but he forgot it soon again. Not thus the gentle, the

amiable Juliet: her heart was affected by the generous and gallant behaviour of her deliverer, and she could not help forming a wish, that she had it in her power to reward him: and thus she often expressed herself to Nanny, whom she used frequently to converse with. In talking the matter over, her father would frequently insinuate, that he might be some young farmer, or smart Londoner, who, though of an inferior rank in life, there is scarcely a possibility of distinguishing from a gentleman. Though his address and language appeared to her very different, yet she did not know but her father's surmises might be just; and it gave rise to many a sigh. Yet she could hardly conceive, that such a person would attempt to make a promise to pay her a visit at her father's. These cogitations employed her imagination; and the generous stranger retained a place in her remembrance, that would have given him much pleasure, had he known it. The very day that Wills and his friend arrived at Pine-hill, her aunt and cousin returned to London. The day after she paid a visit to her old friend Nanny, who, being in raptures with the handsome guest that

that had been at her father's the day before, was very lavish in his praises. Nanny, who imagined the gentleman she had heard Juliet describe so favourably was a rich and a grand man, could never conceive, nor did it ever enter into her head, that he could be dressed in such plain cloaths as Wills appeared in. Juliet, who knew very well that love was capable of assuming many disguises, listened very attentively to her description; and could not help thinking, that it must be this gentleman who had come to pay her the visit he had promised. This made her little heart flutter with joy. But, as she returned home, she could not forbear from entertaining some reflections very prejudicial to Wills's fortune and character: and she feared that her father's suspicions were but too true concerning him. She found also, that she had indulged herself in thinking oftener and more favourably of him than prudence would justify, considering her total ignorance of him. Her resolutions, in consequence of these thoughts, bore very hardly against her lover: nevertheless she could not help wishing to see him. And how much she was surprized, and

what she felt, at the sight of him, we have already informed our readers.

When she returned home, she indulged her own reflections; for Sir Lionel was too much engaged in the consideration of his own importance, to condescend to look at any body in the church, or to disturb her with any suspicions. Many gentlemen of the country dined there that day, who came to congratulate Sir Lionel on his accession to the title and fortune; and consequently, Juliet, who retired soon after dinner, had time enough to ruminate on her situation, and the visit and appearance of her lover: for she very justly concluded that it was upon her account he came into the country. And here we must own, that Juliet could not but stifle, for a time, the insinuations of prudence, and indulge the pleasing sensations the sight of him had given her. In the midst of these reflections, her maid brought her word, that Mr. Johnson, the steward, begged to see her, about something he had to say to her. She desired he might be sent up; and, in the mean time, was a little anxious to know what was the meaning of this message.

sage. Johnson appeared: the maid departed, and left them by themselves.

“Well, Mr. Johnson, what is your
“business with me?”

“I am come, Miss Juliet, upon an ex-
“traordinary errand; and, I hope, you
“won’t be angry with me.”

“No certainly: I am sure you would
“do nothing to deserve my anger. But
“what is this errand?”

“It is to bring you this letter, Ma-
“dam.”

“From whom, Sir, pray?”

“When you read it, you will be in-
“formed, Madam.”

“Indeed, Mr. Johnson, I shall not, un-
“less I know whom it comes from.”

“Mr. Wills, Madam, desired me to
“present it to you.”

“I

"I don't know any such person, but I
"will read it; it may be concerning some
"business."

She turned to the window, and breaking open the seal with a trembling hand, read as follows.

Madam,

From the hour I first saw you, your lovely image has never quitted my eyes, nor your idea my remembrance. Unable to remain at such a distance from you, I have ventured to appear in your presence. But how shall I excuse myself, or tell you the purpose for which I am come hither? My presumption, I fear, will induce my punishment. A stranger, and without any recommendation, am I come here, to ask you to think favourably of me. Though my station in life, and the prospects of fortune, now unhappily obscured, would once have entitled me to have made such proposals to Sir Lionel, as might, with your approbation, have proved agreeable; yet to none of these can I pretend now, and all I have to offer in my own behalf, is, that I love you with the most ardent
and

and pure affection; and that, had not the fear of being supplanted by a rich and powerful rival, almost driven me to distraction, I had not dared to acquaint you with a passion I determined to bury in silence, till some favourable opportunity offered of declaring it, and making myself in some degree worthy of your hand. On your mercy, Madam, I throw myself. Terrified with the fears of losing you for ever, I only wish to know my fate from your lips: and if I shall be banished from your sight, misery and despair must be my portion. Permit me to assure you that I am and ever shall be, with the truest affection and the most sincere respect,

Madam,

Your devoted servant,

FRANCIS WILLS.

When she had finished it, she turned about to Johnson, and asked him if he knew the purport of the letter which he had brought her? He replied, "he believed he did."

"And how could you presume to bring
"me an address from a man whom I know
"no-

“nothing of, and whom you, perhaps,
“don’t know? If my father was informed
“of this proceeding, I am sure he would
“be extremely angry.”

“I am sure he would, Madam: but I
“would encounter any danger to serve the
“gentleman that wrote you that letter.”

“It is a very extraordinary one,” said
she; “and I desire you may tell him, that
“I shall receive no more letters from
“him.”

“That message will break his heart,
“Miss Juliet; and if you knew how good,
“how noble and generous he is, you
“would have some pity on him.”

“How came you to be so well acquaint-
“ed with him, that you should know his
“virtues so well?”

“Oh! Madam, I have reason to know
“them; I am under the greatest obliga-
“tions to him.

What-

“Whatever they may be,” said she, “it is very improper and imprudent in me to carry on a correspondence with him: and so make him that answer.”

“Oh!” said Johnson: throwing himself on his knees before her, “do not make me the means of driving so worthy and so amiable a young gentleman to ruin and distraction.”

Juliet, who was extremely surprized at his emotions, and his taking Wills’s part so strenuously, bade him rise; and insisted upon knowing the cause of his being so much attached to him. Johnson, though it was very disagreeable to him to repeat his story, thought, nevertheless, that it might influence her in his favour: and, after entreating her to be secret, and telling her that he put his life into her hands, he related his whole history; enlarging on Wills’s generosity and clemency, the manner of his meeting him near the park wall and the conversation they had that day together. Juliet’s feelings, during this relation, are not easily described: she shuddered with horror at the danger Johnson,

son, who had been bred up with her from a child, was plunged in. Her heart throbbed with joy, when she heard of Wills's behaviour: and she no less admired his delicacy in the conduct he preserved with Johnson. Juliet's mind was as amiable as her person was lovely. With all the tender sensibility of the sex, she possessed a great share of good sense; and her talents, naturally bright, were improved by education. Her heart, therefore, could not help approving those sentiments in Wills, which bore so great a resemblance to her own. "Really," said she, "Mr. Johnson," after a long pause, "I cannot blame your earnestness to serve this gentleman: your situation was terrible indeed, if he had not been so merciful. I don't know what to say."

Johnson thought now was his time to assist his friend effectually: he said so many things in his praise, and spoke so much of his despondency, and the dreadful consequences of her refusing to see him, that he happily prevailed with her to give him a favourable answer. She asked when he should see him again: and being informed:

"Well,

“Well, if it is possible, I will be there,
“and hear from him what he would have.”
As she spoke, a blush overspread her face;
and, unwilling that Johnson should be a
witness of her confusion, she went into
another apartment: and he, overjoyed at
the success of his embassy, departed.

When the charming Juliet was alone,
she read over the letter several times. She
reflected on what Johnson had told her;
and found, upon casting up the account in
her own bosom, there was a ballance in
favour of what she had heard of Wills’s
principles: however, she determined to act
very circumspectly: and though she would
not wish to disobey her father, yet the
melancholy example her sister afforded
her, made her resolve to oppose his will,
that would only by complying with it
make her wretched.

Johnson was so pleased at the favour-
able reception he met with, that he set
out early in the morning to acquaint Wills
with it; having first given his father so-
me hints of what he was to expect in
the evening, renewing his charge to him

to keep the most profound silence. His arrival surprized both Wills and Lawson; and each had their different sentiments of the matter. But when he told them what she had said, an indifferent spectator would have supposed that Lawson had been the favoured lover: for he embraced Johnson with much fervency, and capered about the room with great agility, whilst Wills sat speechless and thoughtful. However, he thanked Johnson heartily, and keeping him to dinner, in the afternoon they all set out together for the White Hart.

C H A P T E R XVIII.

An interview, which some of our readers will, and some will not, like.

WILLS was by no means sociable company: he was revolving in his mind in what manner he should address Juliet. He felt unusual perturbations: and his mind was never in such a state, or was he ever less collected, than at that moment. Johnson and Lawson, whose feelings were not so delicate, and whose sentiments

timents were less refined, amused themselves very agreeably during the walk: for Lawson entertained a great respect for his companion, who had so far advanced Wills's affairs in so short a time. They at length arrived at the father's house, and found Juliet, the lovely Juliet, there. If her confusion was great, Wills's equalled, it. She first was able to tell him; that she had not forgot his generosity in rescuing her from a dreadful death, and that she should always retain a most grateful sense of it. Wills, who blushed exceedingly while she spoke, muttered, just sufficiently loud to be intelligible, that "it was the "happiest hour of his life in which he had "rendered her any service."

"I believe," said Miss Harcourt, "that "gentleman," turning to Lawson, "was "also assisting you, and is likewise entitled, "to my thanks."

"They overpay the service infinitely,"
"Madam," returned Lawson.

"Ah," said old Johnson, "if the vil-
"lagers here knew that these gentlemen
L 2 "had

“had saved you, they would have made a
“bonfire for ’um.”

So saying, he went out, his son and
Lawson following him soon after. Nanny
was called out about some domestic busi-
ness, and the amiable couple were left
alone. They remained silent for a short
time: and Wills could not, for the soul of
him, utter a syllable. His eyes were fixed
on the ground, and he sat in a state of
seeming stupefaction. Miss Harcourt drew
him from his reverie. “To a gentleman,
“to whom I owe such an obligation, I
“may be excusable in thus transgressing
“the rules of propriety. I was honoured
“with a letter from you, Sir; and I will
“not pretend to misunderstand your mean-
“ing: But, Sir——”

“’Tis true, Madam, that I attempted
“to make you acquainted with a passion,
“that I conceived for you, the moment
“that I was so happy as to save a life that
“is much dearer to me than my own: but
“it is impossible to acquaint you with the
“sincerity of my heart, or the devotion
“with which I behold you. I am a stran-
“ger, thus honoured by your condescen-
“sion:

“sion: and only worthy of it, by the purity and honour of my affection.”

While he spoke, his eyes sparkled with inexpressible vivacity, and his modest diffidence added a blush to the natural bloom of his cheeks: but his voice faltered, and he hesitated while he spoke. His manner plainly indicated perturbations.

“This declaration, Sir, I am by no means at liberty to hear. If my father should sanctify——”

“Hear me, Madam,” said he, interrupting her: “my tongue is a stranger to deceit, and truth is the language of my heart: therefore I will not impose upon her whom my soul loveth. If pecuniary qualifications must gain you, alas! I shall lose you for ever.” He therefore informed her who he was, his connexions and prospects, and how he had lost his aunt’s favour, though he concealed the occasion of it. He also acquainted her with his present situation: and, assuring her that, from the hour she had told him she was disengaged, he had entertained the

fondest hopes of proving acceptable to her, and had flattered himself that she would give him leave to devote his life to her service, but that these were killed by despair, when he heard of the rank and wealth of Sir Lionel, and found that a nobleman was to become her suitor, and that too by the consent of her father. "And now charming Miss Harcourt, I "have opened my heart to you. I confess my own unworthiness, and how little I merit the possession of your hand: "however, it will be some satisfaction to "me to think, that I shall have had the "happiness of acquainting you with my "passion, hopeless as it is, before I abandon myself to despair." He ceased: and Juliet lifting up her eyes, saw a big tear stand trembling in his, and perceived how much his whole frame was agitated.

"Sir," replied Juliet, "I have every "reason to believe what you say; but my "father has conceived such notions of my "shining in a sphere of life that may be "very grand, and very miserable, that he "would never consent to listen to any proposals you could make him."

"I know

"I know it, and it adds to my mis-
 "ery: I see it, I see it, Miss Harcourt; I
 "never shall meet Sir Lionel's approbation,
 "and I never will tempt his daughter to
 "an act of disobedience. I will be wretch-
 "ed, but not criminal: and all my conso-
 "lation will be, that I shall adore you,
 "and you only, while I live."

"These exalted sentiments, are very
 "consistent with Mr. Wills's character."

"Mine, Madam? alas! it is unknown
 "to you!"

No, indeed, Sir. Mr. Johnson, who
 "was your strenuous advocate, informed
 "me of your generosity and humanity:
 "and it would be unjust not to allow you
 "the praise due to your merit. Indeed,
 "Sir, I wish I could reward it."

"Oh, Miss Harcourt, it is only in
 "your power to bless me beyond the race
 "of man. My presumptuous hopes would
 "prompt me to request you to pity my
 "passion, and believe, my sincere attach-
 "ment to you can only be dissolved by
 "death

“death, and to entreat you to allow me
“hereafter to approach you, when I may
“be better able to avow my affection.
“But when I consider this concession will
“bring you into endless trouble, and oc-
“casion you so many evils; my heart,
“terrified at the least apprehensions of any
“thing that can give you uneasiness, will
“forego its dearest hopes, to contribute
“to your ease or happiness. Therefore,
“lovely Juliet, I will resign my ill-fated
“pretensions, and, at an humble distance
“from the object of my wishes, pray in-
“cessantly for your eternal felicity.”

His voice was scarcely audible as he pronounced the last words, and he hung his head upon his breast in silent dejection.

“I don’t think riches can constitute
“happiness, Mr. Wills,” said Juliet: “We
“have a sad example in our family alrea-
“dy of the truth of that observation: and
“I assure you, my father shall never force
“me to marry a man I don’t like.”

“Will you, then, give me leave to
“hope? O! amiable maid, didst thou but
“know

“know the scenes of happiness which I
 “had traced out in my romantic imagina-
 “tion to enjoy with you! but they were
 “delusive dreams of a disturbed fancy: I
 “must never know what bliss or true joy
 “is! My transports will be too powerful
 “for my reason and distraction will ensue.”

Indeed Juliet began to be of the same
 opinion; for his voice was more elevated
 than before, and she thought she perceived
 a wildness in his eyes, that alarmed her.
 “Your reason should not suffer itself to be
 “overpowered: I would contribute every
 “thing in my power to——”

“Then do not forbid me to hope,”
 said he, eagerly. “Tell me, that, should
 “fortune be propitious, and I should be
 “restored to my aunt’s favour, you would
 “admit me to breathe out my vows of
 “unalterable love at your feet. Speak,
 “too charming Juliet: speak, and tell me
 “my fate at once.”

“I wish I could render it agreeable to
 “you, Mr. Wills: but what must your
 “opinion of me be, who thus have made

“an appointment with you. Oh, I shall
“die with shame to think on it!”

“What shall I think, Miss Harcourt,
“of you? As of one of those superior
“beings sent to comfort and remove the
“woes attendant on our natures: pure,
“innocent, and the object of our adora-
“tion. But my passion is founded in truth
“and honour, and superior to forms. My
“misfortunes require extraordinary conso-
“lation. Tell me you do not hate me:
“bid me hope, and I shall be happy.”

“After the service you have rendered
“me, I cannot hate you. And could I
“obtain my father’s consent, I will own
“to you ingenuously, that I know no man
“with whom I would more willingly
“spend my life.”

Wills was on his knees at her feet:
her hand, a willing prisoner in his, was
pressed to his lips. His raptures were in-
expressible, his joy tumultuous. His thanks
were broken sentences, unconnected phra-
ses: they were eloquent to her. In a
short time he became more composed; and
the

the moment approaching in which she must return, she told him, that the next day she should go to Mrs. Mannington's, her sister, where she could have an opportunity of seeing him with less constraint than in the place she then was; that she and her sister had ever possessed the greatest friendship for each other, and the most unreserved confidence; and that if he would take the trouble of following her there, that her brother was too much engaged with his amusements to trouble himself about his wife, and they might see each other with more liberty in the presence of her sister. Wills promised faithfully to follow her; assured her of his gratitude and his love; and pressing her unresisting hand to his lips, trembling with joy, he parted from her very unwillingly.

Lawson, who anxiously waited the event of this interview, not but that he had promised himself the most agreeable and fortunate consequences from it, was very glad when it was over, that he might know the truth of the matter: but this he could not do immediately; for his friend took young Jonson aside, and conferred with

with him some time. The subject of their conversation was nothing more than Wills's thanking him for the token of his friendship in conveying his letter, and speaking so favourably of him, "I assure you, Sir," replied Johnson, "that the life you saved, "is devoted to your service."

"It is time to forget that now," said Wills, and, joining Lawson, they proceeded towards their lodging at Nantwich.

Wills could not refuse to tell him the success of his negotiation; it was no more than Lawson expected. And, when Wills talked in raptures of her condescension and goodness, and praised her ingenuousness in the most fervent and exalted terms, he said, it was no more than he foretold all along, and hoped that Wills would, for the future, pay more respect and attention to his prophecies. In the mean time, he rejoiced very heartily to see his friend's wishes crowned with success.

Having informed themselves of the road that led to Mr. Mannington's, they set out, the day but one, after this, to meet
Miss

Miss Harcourt at her sister's. They arrived there, when the 'Squire was engaged at his bottle, with his fellow sportsmen: and our friends, who had enquired for Miss Harcourt, were introduced to the ladies. It is not to be doubted, but Juliet informed her sister of every particular; and she very honestly encouraged her in her intentions of being happy with the man she esteemed, in any state, rather than live splendidly with the man she hated. "But Juliet," says she, "let me have an opportunity of seeing this man, who has made such a hole in your heart. Misfortune my dear sister, has taught me prudence and experience. I will give you my opinion."

When Wills and Lawson entered the room, she was not at all at a loss to fix upon Juliet's choice, and conceived a good opinion of him from the moment she saw him; and after tea, taking a walk in the garden, Lawson entertained Miss Harcourt, and Mrs. Mannington fastened herself upon Wills. There are many people, whose openness of countenance prepossesses us in their favour at the first sight; and whose words,

words, delivered with the conscious confidence of integrity, carry conviction along with them. This was Wills's situation, and he soon made a friend of Mrs. Mannington. They then changed companions; and she gave Wills an opportunity of assuring his dear Juliet of his eternal fidelity; vows, which she was not at all displeased at hearing, and he had the pleasure to find she approved them.

Mrs. Mannington appointed Wills to call on her alone the next morning, at an hour when she knew the 'Squire would be after his hounds: and hinted, that his coming alone would be agreeable. He accordingly attended her at the appointed time, and he met his Juliet with her. Mrs. Mannington had so good an opinion of Wills's honour and sincerity, that she made no scruple of taking his part before his mistress: and told her, that there was no reason, if she believed he loved her, why they should make each other unhappy by concealing their sentiments: that prudence forbad them, and the laws prevented their entering into any other engagements, or forming any other ties, than those which
pro-

proceeded from the mutual inclinations of two virtuous hearts. "The knowledge of each others affections, will make the time of probation pass more happily," said she; and added, with a smile, as she quitted the room, that "she would be "quarantee for Mr. Wills." Emboldened by the encouragement he had met with from Mrs. Mannington, he ventured to press his Juliet to an explanation: and she generously assured him of her esteem for him. They maintained a happy conversation for near two hours, without perceiving how the time slipped away. On his part, it was supported with joy, gratitude, and love, mingled with the most delicate respect. On hers, with tenderness and pleasure, corrected with a modest reserve: Yet he ventured, not without obtaining pardon for his offence, to approach her lips, and print a fervid kiss on them.

Mrs. Mannington, at last, thought it high time to put an end to their conversation; and she came into the room. "I find" said she, "that you have agreed very well together, and have not been quarelling or fighting." They both return-

turned her their thanks for the part she took in their affairs; and renewed, before her, their vows of unalterable constancy, in whatever changes might happen to them. Mrs. Mannington told them, from the similarity of their dispositions she imagined they were formed for each other; and wishing them all imaginable happiness; informed Wills she should expect him and his friend the next evening to drink tea, as she and her sister were engaged to dine and spend that day out. Wills promised to be there. He took leave of the ladies, and sought Lawson.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The arrival of a visitor. A change in affairs: And wherein it is shown, that it is every bit as easy to tell a lie as a truth, especially when a man is used to it.

WILLS went over early in the afternoon to Mrs. Mannington's, in hopes of having a little private conversation with his beloved Juliet: in this he was
not

not disappointed. Mrs. Mannington took care to let them be together in their little walks, amusing herself with Lawson, whose sprightliness rendered him very agreeable to her. Juliet indulged her lover, by supporting herself in her walk with his arm. He uttered a thousand tender and passionate things, that equally tended to convince her of his affection, and his good sense; for he avoided the beaten road of flattery, and his praises and compliments were so artfully and politely introduced, that they seemed to flow naturally in the conversation, and not as the result of study and design. Pleased with each other, and happy as they could be, they began to consider their union not far distant: and Wills talked of returning to London, and making some attempts at a reconciliation with his aunt. In this delightful intercourse of souls they strayed, 'till Mrs. Mannington warned them that it was near tea-time. They returned, and the conversation became general. Mr. Mannington was gone across the country upon some sporting party, and not expected to return for three or four days: so the lovers promised themselves many happy meetings in the mean

time. Lawson now had set all ill or adverse fortune at defiance. The possession of Juliet's heart, in his opinion, secured every thing else; and it was not to be doubted but Wills was pretty sure of that. They were therefore all chearful and happy; and Lawson, encreased the general good humour by several little successful sallies. They had already drank one cup of tea, when a servant announced the arrival of a gentleman in a postchaise and four, who had a letter from Sir Lionel to deliver to Miss Harcourt; and added, that there were coronets on the carriage. Wills turned pale at this information, dreading the advent of his rival. Juliet, however she might be apprehensive of the same thing, gave him a look, which served in part to dispel his fears, and reassure him. But how was he astonished, when he saw Mrs. Mannington, who had gone to receive her noble visitor, return, followed by the identical Lord Cotswold, whom we have celebrated for his politeness, justice, and gallantry, in the former part of this delectable history. He approached Juliet with the most respectful politeness; and assuring her how much he thought

thought himself honoured by being the messenger of her father's commands, delivered the letter into her hands. She begged leave to read it, and found it contained a command for her to return to Pine-hill with his Lordship, whose affectionate desire to see her could not be restrained, and who had taken that trouble to conduct her in safety himself. Wills, whose eyes were fixed upon her while she read the letter, perceived her change colour; and imagined every thing that was bad. Lord Cotswold was too much taken up in contemplating Juliet's charms, which he had both leisure and opportunity for, while she was looking over her father's letter, to consider any body else in the room. When she had done, she returned her thanks to his Lordship for the trouble he had taken, declared her readiness to attend him; and then explained the matter to her sister. Wills was now lost to hope and to reason, and began to debate with himself, whether he should not call his Lordship to an account for the treatment he had formerly received from him. It was at this moment, that his Lordship recollected Wills's face and person, thro'

the difference of his dress; neither did he forget his name. Surprized to see him there, he could not account for it. He watched him, and thought he saw some looks pass between Juliet and him, that did not please him. He kept up the conversation during tea, in an easy familiarity, with Mrs. Mannington and Juliet, who, however, spoke but little. Wills remained totally silent; and Lawson, affected by the change in his friend's countenance, had lost his gaiety. When the tea was over, Juliet acquainted his Lordship, that she was ready whenever he pleased; and being told, "when it suited her," she just stepped up stairs to throw on a cloak, and, in the mean time, the carriage was ordered out. Mrs. Mannington lamented to his Lordship the absence of her husband, as she was not capable of receiving him in a proper manner. He interrupted her, and paying her some polite compliments, Juliet put an end to them, by entering into the room dressed for her journey. His Lordship bowed to the friends very coolly. Juliet had just time to give Wills a look, unperceived by any body else; and my lord handed her to the door, attended by Mrs. Manning-

nington. Wills followed them with his eyes: but they soon vanished out of his sight. He heard the carriage drive off, and his torment became insupportable.

“Do you know Lord Cotswold?” said Lawfon.

“But too well,” replied Wills: “and, “but for the presence of my Juliet, whose “gentle breast I would not disturb for the “world, he should have known me too.”

Lord,” rejoined Lawfon, “I never “heard you mention a word of him.”

“That may be: but I’ll tell you as we go “homewards, which will be shortly now.”

When Mrs. Mannington returned, she found Wills traversing the room with a quick pace, and a dejected countenance. “Ah! “Madam,” said he, “the amiable, the excellent Juliet is lost to me for ever, I fear.”

“You have but a bad opinion of her, if “you imagine she can so easily forget you.”

“Ah! have not I every thing to fear
“from the quality of my rival, and the
“commands of her father in his favour?”

Mrs. Mannington endeavoured to reinspire him, with hope; and as she had conceived a very sincere regard for him, assured him, that Juliet had the tenderest esteem for him: “but,” said she, “are not you acquainted with his Lordship? he seemed to
“eye you with great particularity.” Wills confessed he had seen him once, and known a little of him in his late wife’s time: and all Mrs. Mannington’s questions could not prevail on him to tell her any more. After thanking her in the most grateful and sincere manner, for the interest she took in his affairs; and assuring her he should ever remember it, he departed with his friend Lawson, and, with an heavy heart, they took their road to the inn.

Wills walked on, without saying a word for a long time; till Lawson, unwilling to indulge his melancholy any longer, and also eager to know how he became acquainted with Lord Cotswold, reminded him of his promise. Wills complied with his desire,
and

and informed him of every circumstance, which his delicacy prevented his repeating when he had related his history to Lawson before. "And I was in some doubt," added Wills, "whether I should not return his lordship's former insults to me: but when I considered it would engage me in quarrel, and in the presence of Juliet, I determined to wait for a proper opportunity, which I have no doubt will soon happen."

"Faith," replied Lawson, "I should have been apt to have sparred at him, and brought on an explanation: it would have been some comfort, to have acquainted Miss Harcourt with the temper and disposition of her new admirer."

"It would have looked mean and base in me to have done so. Why should I endeavour to raise my own character upon the ruin of another man's? Besides, considering I was an interested party, it might be very justly supposed that I did not adhere so closely to truth as I ought to have done. For all these considerations, and finding that he took no notice of me, I was resolved to wait for a more

“favourable season to acquaint him with my
“resentment; which I assure you, Lawson,
“I have not forgot.”

“Well,” said Lawson, “you may think
“this right; but I should have laid open
“his character at once before them all, or
“at least should have told Mrs. Manning-
“ton, who appears your very good friend.”

“Perhaps you might have succeeded
“better, Lawson: but you know I have
“strange notions of my own.”

With these melancholy reflections, and
depressed spirits, did they beguile the te-
dious way that led them to Nantwich.

In the mean time lord Cotswold, with
the lovely Juliet by his side, whirled away
as fast as his horses could well go, to Pine-
hill. She was not in very good spirits, but
she replied to his lordship with much polite-
ness on every occasion: she was only silent
when he assured her of the respect he en-
tertained for her, and how happy he should
esteem himself, if her heart joined her fa-
ther's good opinion of him. He would
not

not continue this conversation as she made no answer to any thing he said; which he conceived might be occasioned by reserve in this first interview with him: he therefore changed the subject. Lord Cotswold, who, though an agreeable and genteel man, was much inferior to Wills in personal beauty; and, as he admired Juliet very much, was fearful of Wills's pretensions being successful: he therefore asked Miss Harcourt how long she had known Mr. Wills. She replied, "Not long." He asked if she knew him in London. She replied, "No: he "was her sister's acquaintance." His lordship added with a sigh, that "he was a "good genteel young man: it was pity "that he had been so wild and thoughtless." This alarmed Juliet, and she could not refrain from asking his Lordship, "if he knew "Mr. Wills." "He had known a little of "him in London, where he had some conversation about a rascally agent, who had "defrauded him of large sums of money, "which he wanted him to forgive him; and "he supposed that a pretty daughter which "he had, was the occasion of Mr. Wills's "liberality; for he heard from his attorney, "who described Mr. Wills's person to him,

“that he was the man who had paid the
“money for him, and released him from
“prison; and he supposed the sums of mo-
“ney he had lavished upon the girl, who
“was very handsome, was the occasion of
“this great alteration in his dress. That
“he pitied him extremely, and was sorry
“he had been duped by so artful an hussy,
“who had spread her snares for him also,
“which he happily escaped.” This account
sunk deep in Juliet’s mind, and she secretly
condemned herself for giving credit to the
insinuations of a stranger. How sincerely
did she lament her own imprudence! Be-
sides, his lordship’s account tallied and
agreed with his own story: and she con-
cluded, that it must have been for this
reason that his aunt shook him off. One
thing she had laid down in her mind as an
impossibility; viz. that his lordship should
deviate from truth: and Wills’s silence in
general concerning the cause of his aunt’s
displeasure, confirmed her in suspicions very
unfavourable to our hero: yet still she lov-
ed him, and wished to hear what he could
say in his own behalf upon the occasion.
To be more assured, she asked his lord-
ship, “how long ago it was this transaction
hap-

“happened?” His answer fixed the time, and Juliet was wretched. His lordship added some circumstances that his fertile imagination suggested, and which the credulous Juliet received as truth. Lord Cotswold gratified two passions by this simple misrepresentation of facts, which he held very justifiable; his love, and his revenge: the former, by displacing a rival he had reason to be afraid of; and the latter, by the same means: for he had not forgot what Wills said to him. Juliet’s charms, with the addition of a large fortune, made her a very desirable prize, and his lordship determined to have her: her father’s approbation of the match made his access to her very easy, and cleared the way of many difficulties. He perceived this account had disconcerted Juliet, though she endeavoured to appear quite unconcerned. He therefore took no notice of it, and chattered in the most easy and familiar manner, mingling many professions of his regard for her, with his admiration of her charms.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

State of affairs at Pine-hill. An interview. A race. And a criminal apprehended.

WHEN they arrived at Pine-hill, Sir Lionel received them with much pleasure, and introduced Lord Cotswold to her, as the man who was to be her husband in a very short time. "Where the parties are agreed, my lord," added he, "there is no occasion for extraordinary delays."

When Juliet retired to her chamber, after spending a disagreeable evening with his Lordship and her father, she ruminated on the adventures of the day. There was something so odd in his Lordship's mentioning Wills, whom he could not suppose to have any correspondence with her, that she thought it the luckiest thing in the world; and how to reconcile Wills's deceit with his apparent honesty, she knew not. With an aching heart she went to bed, but not to rest; fearful of the consequences, lest Wills should really be such a man as he was described to her.

Poor

Poor Wills was not a bit easier. He sat down the next day, wrote a very pathetic epistle to her, describing his fears, and his misery: concluding with the strongest assurances of his eternal regard, and the sincerity of his affection. As the evening approached, he set out for the White Hart; and, finding young Johnson, he conjured him to contrive some means of conveying this letter to her, which he promised to do: in about an hour he returned, and delivered a note in answer to Wills. It contained these words:

“How can I regard or believe the assurances of one, who has already been guilty of deceit? I trusted to your honour and your honesty: these being falsified, what can I rely on? Mr. Johnson will bring you to me to-morrow evening. I shall be glad to know what you can say in your own defence, or why you have imposed upon the too credulous

“JULIET.”

Wills almost started into frenzy at the perusal of this note; but moderating his passion for the present, asked Johnson what Miss

Miss Harcourt had said to him. He told him that she wished to see him; and he was to bring him into the park by a private gate, where they might have an opportunity of seeing each other; and, that she recommended silence and punctuality. Wills promised not to fail; and, as he returned, communicated the cause of his uneasiness to poor Lawson: at the same time, that he gave a loose to the distress and agony of his heart. Lawson sympathized with him; and conjectured, that Lord Cotswold must have said something concerning him to her. "No, that he dared not do," said Wills; "for I have such damning proofs against him, such an opportunity of making his villany manifest, that he would not attempt to rouse me, and could any thing tempt me to a deed of that kind, it would be his injuring me in this tender point, that concerns my honour and my love."

Wills was upon thorns till the time arrived in which he was to meet Juliet; nor was she less unhappy, as she had also to fear her being discovered with him. Wills, with palpitating heart, accompanied Johnson,

son, and left Lawson behind him at the village. When they had got safe in the park, Johnson fixed him in a particular spot, and went to acquaint Miss Harcourt. He met her, and conducting her to him, he went from them to a considerable distance, and left them to enjoy their private conversation.

Wills first began, by assuring Miss Harcourt how uneasy her note had made him: that there was not a circumstance of his life that he had not related to her, and begged her to inform him what reasons she had for supposing him guilty of deceiving or imposing on her. She very readily told him every thing that Lord Cotswold had mentioned to her, without omitting or disguising a single circumstance. "Gracious heaven!" said Wills, when she finished, "lives there such a man! 'Tis true, my lovely, my adorable Juliet, I know Lord Cotswold, and we had some such conversation; but, if there's faith in man, he has misrepresented things falsely and basely. To his teeth will I tell him so, and cram the infamous lye down his throat."

"Re-

“Restrain your passion, Mr. Wills; and
“consider, by doing so, you will discover
“that I informed you of the transaction.
“But cannot you unfold this mysterious af-
“fair to me?”

“Excuse me, Miss Harcourt; till I
“have made him confess his injustice to
“me, I cannot.”

“I am sorry, Mr. Wills, you should
“think me unworthy of your confidence.”

“Don’t judge so hardly of me: thou
“art dearer to me than the blood that
“throbs at my heart: and, by every fa-
“cred power, there is nothing concerning
“myself that I would not impart to you;
“but, in the present case, there is the ho-
“nour of a young lady concerned, and I
“am not at liberty to relate the story.
“But be assured that Lord Cotswold has
“deceived you.”

“By your own confession, he has told
“some truth: and why is not the story to
“be trusted to me?”

“Not

“Not at present, my charming Juliet,
“till I can prove my truth and make his
“Lordship attest my honour: then you
“shall know it all, believe me. Oh, there
“are a thousand reasons that forbid you
“to learn it now.”

“Indeed, Mr. Wills, there is some
“dreadful mystery in this; and you make
“me very unhappy, by not telling me the
“whole affair. I’ll believe you without any
“other proof.”

“Oh, Juliet,” said he, “to what a
“precipice do you drive me!”

His delicacy, and regard for Sophia Belton and her father, tied his tongue up. But his desire to vindicate his own character, and to ease her of any suspicions that might make her unhappy, had almost prevailed with him, when Juliet, fearful and apprehensive, turned about, and saw some lights at a distance, and heard somebody calling her. “Fly,” said she; “fly, for heaven’s
“sake, or I shall be ruined: go strait on be-
“fore you.” She had time to say no more. She had hastened towards the lights; and he, with all his speed, pursued a contrary way.

As he was totally ignorant of the situation of the park, and had strayed with Juliet from the gate he entered at, he could not tell where to find it: and fearing to go back, lest he should be seen by any of the servants, and, for the same reason, not chusing to call out to Johnson, he made all the expedition he thought needful, and endeavoured to gain the wall, which he was sure of getting over. He had not gone a great way, when he thought he heard the tread of feet; and, looking about, saw two men. He was very near them. "There he is," said one of them; "that's he." The first idea that occurred to him was, that Lord Cotswold had got intelligence of his being in the park, and had sent these men to destroy him; for he did not imagine he would stop at any thing. He therefore redoubled his speed, and left his pursuers, who followed him as fast as they could, far behind. They, finding themselves so much outstript, gave a loud whistle, that made the woods and hills echo again. Wills without arms, if he stood, would have maintained an unequal combat; and especially as he supposed some of the gang placed in another part of the park. He stopped and listened: and
heard

heard the sound of the feet pursuing him very distinctly; he therefore kept on, and seeing the park wall, he concluded himself very happy in escaping their fury. An eminence assisted him to get on the wall, which he sprang over with great agility, and, to his utter mortification and astonishment, found himself surrounded by four men, who seized on him the moment he alighted on the other side. "Ah ha! master! what, we have caught you at last: you are fond of venison, are you? Yes, yes, you shall have deer indeed! but I believe other people will find the sauce." Wills immediately judged that they had mistaken his person; but nevertheless a discovery must be the consequence, and his Juliet would be ruined. This consideration struck him so forcibly at that moment, that he could not forbear exclaiming, "Wretch that I am! What will become of me?"

"Why, you'll only be hanged to be sure; nothing more," said one of the fellows.

"Well, and where am I to go?" said he,

“Why, we’ll secure you for this night,
“and carry you before a justice in the
“morning.”

They accordingly took him the road
that led to Johnson’s.

C H A P T E R XXXIV.

A preparation for the trial of two offenders. The benefit and happiness arising from the strict administration of justice. And the appearance of two persons, whom the reader has been already introduced to.

THE reader will doubtless be curious to know, why poor Wills was thus treated; the cause was this. Sir Lionel had several deer taken out of his park lately, and, being very much incensed at it, had offered a reward for apprehending the offenders. This did not put a stop to the evil: the deer were still killed, and carried away. He then doubled the reward for apprehending them, and armed his own servants. Wills unfortunately, when

when he was pursued, had directed his course to that part of the park wall, where the thieves had been traced, and their footsteps plainly appeared: there was a watch there, and the people in the park giving the alarm, they saw him coming over, and secured him accordingly.

Many disagreeable thoughts occupied Wills's imagination, as they led him in triumph to old Johnson's. Their exultations, and the dispute about sharing the reward for apprehending him, gave him no pain: he only felt for what poor Juliet would suffer, if it should come out in the course of the examinations, which this unlucky mistake would produce, what brought him into the park. He could endure the insolence of the rabble, and the disagreeable forms he must go through to clear his innocence, with a great deal of patience: but his soul was wrung with anguish when he reflected on the consequences that would fall so heavy on Juliet, as well from an enraged father, as the malice of a spiteful world.

When they arrived at the village, one of the men went into Johnson's before the rest: "Ah master Johnson, we have caught "one of the dogs at last."

"Have you?" said the old man; "that's "good news indeed."

"Aye, that we have, and taken 'un in "the fact too: here, bring him in."

But what was his surprise when he saw Wills brought in, secured as a felon! "Oh "Lord, oh Lord, said Johnson, you have "mistaken; this gentleman could never go "a deer-stealing."

"Be he what he wull, gentleman or no "gentleman, we caught him as he leaped "over the park wall, just by the gripe, "you know, where the t'other thieves had "got over."

At this instant Lawson, alarmed by the bustle, came to see what was the matter: but nothing could equal his astonishment to see his friend Wills in this situation. When he heard the matter, the first thing that

that occurred to him, was, to relieve Wills by force. He spoke to him in French, and imparted his scheme; but this Wills opposed, as it might be productive of much mischief. The holding a conversation in an unknown tongue before them, alarmed the men; and one of them proposed securing Lawfon, who he observed was one of the gang, for he had been seen with him hovering about the house. It was no sooner said than done: and as they were in possession of the doors and the house, it was needless to make resistance. He demanded, what they had to alledge against him? and, why they seized him? They said, "that he was a suspicious person, and "would be obliged to give an account of "himself." Old Johnson protested that they were using violence against two worthy gentlemen: but they would not be put off by any such pretences. The hope of obtaining the reward, prevented their listening to any thing. When young Johnson came in, he was as much surpris'd and shocked as any body: but the people knowing him, and finding him acquainted with the prisoners, they permitted them to go with him into the parlour, upon his

promising for their appearance: and here a consultation was held. Johnson laid all the blame upon himself, for not being in the way to direct him where to go. Wills acquitted him of being in any fault. But what was to be done? "These fellows will carry you to justice Woodward's to-morrow," said Johnson, "and there will be my master and the lord there: and then we shall be all undone."

"No," said Wills, "I'll perish before it shall be known how I came into the park: the honour of my dear Juliet is more precious to me than my life."

"Your innocence can be proved, that's certain," said Johnson: "but it will be attended with a very disagreeable discovery."

"I am resolved," said Wills.

Poor Nanny, who happened to be at a neighbour's, and hearing what had happened, ran home to her father's as fast as she could, and finding that it was Wills and his friend who were apprehended, and
con-

concluding from the discourse of the men, that they would certainly be hanged, for they had settled that point directly among themselves, rushed into the room where they were sitting, crying bitterly. Wills asked her, what ail'd her? and telling him what she had heard, he comforted and told her, there was no fear of that. He was struck with her affection, and assured her he would not forget it. They composed themselves as well as they could; and ordering something for supper, they contrived to get a bed in the house. Lawson, seeing his friend extremely dejected, endeavoured to amuse him, but in vain.

While this scene was carrying on, another was transacted at Pine-hill house. They who had apprehended Wills, did not intend to inform Sir Lionel of the affair till the morning: but it had taken wind; and, as they were at supper, the butler informed Sir Lionel, that two of the dear-stealers had been caught in the fact; and that he heard they were to be all at justice Woodward's to-morrow. "Well," said the knight, "I shall be there, and know what they have to say for themselves."

“selves.” Juliet heard it, without imagining she was so nearly concerned in it. The servant’s addition had prevented her reflecting any thing about Wills. But when she retired to her chamber, her maid informed her of more particulars than she chose to hear. “Law, Madam,” said Betty, “I hears as how they have cotched “two of the deer-stealers: and one of “them, John Whittle says, is as handsome a properable young man as ever “you would desire to clap your two looking eyes on, and has as much the appearance of a gentleman: he was taken “getting over the wall: and the other was “caught at Gaffer Johnson’s, at the White “Hart.” This intelligence was more than Juliet could support. “Poor wretches,” said she, veiling her private feelings under the appearance of general compassion, “what will become of them!”

“Oh, Madam, John Whittle says as “how they will be both hanged to be sure, “and we’ve all made a bargain to go and “see ’em.”

“That’s

“That’s rather inhuman,” said Juliet:
“but how are they dressed, poor crea-
“tures?”

“O, very smart, Madam, John says,”
replied Betty. “The handsome man was
“dressed in a lightish coat, and his own
“hair curled in his neck. I wonder if
“thieves look like other people!”

“Indeed I don’t know,” said Juliet;
“but you may go, I shall undress myself.”

In truth, the absence of her maid was
very requisite; for her heart was full, and
she could not have indulged the tears, that
now flowed very fast, in Betty’s presence.
What torments did the lovely maid suffer
from this dreadful discovery! “I am the
“cause of it,” said she to herself. I tempt-
“ed him to come into this fatal park. He
“is exposed to ignominy, to the danger
“of suffering an horrid death, by my means.
“And shall I not save him? I will, tho’
“I perish.” Her resolution was soon taken;
and she went to bed, drowned in tears at
the sad alternative which her cruel fate had
reduced her to. Terrible was the agitation
in

in her gentle bosom: between shame, love, pride and duty. Many a bitter sigh escaped her during the sleepless night: and if she chanced to doze, the most horrid dreams were presented to her disturbed imagination, and she was glad to awake to be relieved from them.

Lawson slept soundly: but Wills, anxious for the determination of this disagreeable adventure, was as restless as Juliet. It shocked him to think, that his perfidious and hated rival should behold him even a reputed criminal: yet, hard as it was, he must bear it.

About eight o'clock in the morning they set out for the justice's, guarded by the people who had taken them. The noise of such an affair had alarmed all the country, and men, women, and children, flocked out to the road, to look at them as they passed by. The women all declared, "they would go and see that pretty young man hanged, though it was a thousand pities." In this manner they arrived at Mr. Justice Woodward's.

Sir

Sir Lionel and Lord Cotswold were preparing to go to attend the examination of the villains, when Juliet begged to be admitted of the party; which her father, at the intercession of his lordship, granted.

The only delay at the Justice's was waiting for the arrival of Sir Lionel. At length he came. The justice went out to receive his guests. Miss Juliet was shewn into the parlour, and Lord Cotswold and her father went to the awful tribunal of justice. When his Lordship saw Wills, he presently guessed it was another design than stealing deer that brought him into the park: but if he was hanged for it, how could he help it? Poor Johnson followed his friend and benefactor with an heavy heart. Miss Harcourt beckoned to him and told him to inform her, as he was to attend the examination, when the prisoners were going to be sent to jail. Sir Lionel Harcourt declared he had lost several deer, but could not say the prisoners had taken them. The men who caught him getting over the wall deposed what they knew; and the justice proceeded to ask the prisoner Wills, "What he had to
"say

“say for himself?” He replied, “that he
“was totally ignorant of any accusation;
“for the chief of the evidence against him
“consisted in being found coming over
“the wall, which he did not deny. That
“he was accused of no positive crime.”

“Very true friend,” said the Justice;
“but your conduct is very suspicious.
“Pray who are you?”

“A gentleman.”

“How do you live?”

“Upon my estate.”

“Where does it lie, and what is the
“amount of it?”

Wills resolved him in both questions.

“This must be made to appear.”

“So it can.”

“Where do you generally reside?”

“In

"In London."

"What brought you down here?"

"Pleasure."

"On foot."

"On foot."

"How long have you been here?"

"Such a time."

"And now, friend, what business had
"you in Sir Lionel's park?"

"That is a question I will not answer."

"You will not?"

"I am resolved."

"Then you must go to jail."

"I am ready; and shall willingly sub-
"mit to be tried by my country."

"I be-

“I believe you are a hardened offender, friend; since you don't seem to mind going to jail.”

“It is the province of a magistrate to treat those who labour under even the imputation of a crime, with lenity and tenderneſs; not to insult and terrify them. Take care, Sir, how you treat me: there are laws for you as well as me.”

“I mean nothing elſe but to treat you well: you had better therefore, confeſs what you wanted in the park.”

“You are waſting time, Sir. I have already answered you.”

“Then make out his mittimus, clerk.”

At this inſtant a ſervant entered, to inform the juſtice that a gentleman and a lady wanted him, who had juſt arrived in a coach and four. He cauſed the proceedings to be delayed, and he went out to receive his gueſts. They were two perſons whom he knew intimately well: and he requeſted them to go into an apartment
till

till he had dispatched some business then in hand.

This gentleman and lady were no other than Sophia Belton and her father, who, having succeeded to the fortune of the relation who sent for them, as before taken notice of, were then come to settle with Mr. Woodward about some money affairs. Their virtues, and their melancholy story, rendered them so worthy in the eyes of their relation, that she left them every thing she had in the world, and Sophy was now mistress of a considerable independent fortune.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A joyful meeting: an eclaircissement: the tables turned: and an express: all contained in one chapter.

AS the door of the audience-chamber was open when they passed by, Sophy saw Wills: and when the justice attended them into the room, she told her

father that she was sure Mr. Wills was there.

"You must be mistaken, my dear," said he.

"No," said the justice; "there is a young man of the name Wills, brought before me for a capital offence."

"Good heaven!" said Belton; "my friend, my protector, my saviour. Oh! let me fly, and clasp him in my arms."

Oh! Sir," said Sophy to the justice, her eyes swimming in tears, "he is the best, the worthiest man in the world. I'll go with you, father."

"No," said the justice: "I'll bring him to you: this is somewhat extraordinary!"

He went accordingly to Wills, and told him to follow him: that a gentleman wanted to see him on the most earnest business.

"Me!

“Me! see me!” said Wills; “I’ll follow you, Sir.”

He led him to the apartment where Belton and his daughter were. They flew to his arms: and loaded him with caresses and praises. He embraced them both with the greatest joy. He told them his time was not his own then, when they would have detained him: “But,” said he, recollecting himself, “your coming here is most fortunate. Sure providence interests itself to witness my integrity; Let me entreat you to remain here, and not be seen till I send for you. — Now, Sir,” addressing himself to the justice, “I beg you will reconduct me to the place whence I came.”

The justice now was more complaisant to him, and bid him not be uneasy, for matters would be settled. Just as they had got into the hall of audience, they heard a loud cry of, “Help, help for God’s sake!” Wills sprung to the place from whence the sound came, and saw his adorable Juliet fainting in Johnson’s arms. His soul was froze at the sight for a mo-

ment; and then the situation of his beloved, taught him what to do: he clasped her in his arms, and recalled her to life by the gentle voice of love. By this time the company had gathered into the parlour, and Sir Lionel and Lord Cotswold were struck dumb at the sight. The appearance of her father roused Juliet. She desired the room might be cleared of every body, except the Justice, her father, Lord Cotswold, Johnson, and Wills and Lawson. It was instantly done: and Juliet, throwing herself at her father's feet, told him, "That she would unravel this whole affair, and tho' she should meet with his severest anger, yet she must save an innocent man." She then begun, by acquainting him with her first knowledge of Wills; and proceeded step by step, and even told the cause why she had sent for him into the park, adding, "as she was the sole cause, she only should bear the blame."

"My dearest child," said Sir Lionel, "why did not you acquaint me with this before."

"Sir,"

“Sir,” said he, turning to Wills, “I thank you, for being the deliverer of my darling child, and entreat you to excuse the trouble this mistake has occasioned you. I will endeavour to make you and your friend some amends.”

“Sir it is forgotten and forgiven,” said Wills: “but I have another account to settle here, and that is with you, my Lord. You have heard what that young Lady has publicly declared you told her concerning me. I am now, my Lord, in condition to vindicate my own honour, and return your taunts with interest. Is it true you said so?”

“Sir,” replied his Lordship, “I shall not contradict what that Lady says; nay, more, the fact is true.”

“Base Lord! the punishment of thy crimes is at hand, and shame awaits thee. Mr. Woodward, shall I entreat you to send for the stranger in the other room?”

He obeyed.

“Sir,” said his Lordship, “I shall find
“a time to repay this insolence.”

“You shall never want an opportunity,
“my Lord.”

As he spoke the door opened, and Sophia Belton approaching first, followed by her father, no sooner saw Lord Cotswold, than, giving a loud shriek, she fainted away. Her father left her in the arms of Mr. Woodward. Juliet ran to her assistance, and soon recovered her. Belton's honest indignation was not to be repressed: he sprung forward, and accosted his Lordship, who stood almost petrified with surprise and shame. “Do you know me,
“my Lord? Can you look upon the man
“whose life you determined to sacrifice,
“because he would not surrender up his
“daughter's honour to your libidinous ap-
“petites? and nearly had you effected it,
“if this young man, like our guardian
“angel, had not stepped between us and
“destruction. He preserved my life: and
“my child is still pure and virtuous. And
“so far has he been from endeavouring to
“acquire any merit from this action, that
“I ha-

“I have in vain endeavoured to find him
“out to repay him the money he expend-
“ed to relieve me from jail, where I was
“thrown, out of revenge, by you.”

He ceased. Wills led Miss Belton to-
wards Miss Harcourt. “This is the Lady,
“Madam, whom Lord Cotswold has told
“you of: She is present, and can answer
“any thing he chuses to say concerning
“her.” My Lord remained silent. Belton
once more threw his arms about Wills:
“Let me no more part from you, my friend,
“my son: live with me: I have now for-
“tune enough. Thanks, thanks, my friend.”

The scene began to grow too affecting:
the old gentleman's gratitude brought tears
into his eyes, and choaked his utterance.
Every body was moved. “This young
man,” said Sir Lionel, “must have been
“very worthy: sure it is a pleasure to be
“thus beloved!” Johnson, who could not
tell how to stand this scene, had retired to
the door, to wipe his eyes in private: so
heartily did he rejoice at Wills's release,
and his being able to clear up his cha-
racter in such a manner. He had strolled

into the road. A man on horseback stopped: "Is this the road to Pine-hill?"

"What do you want there?" said Johnson.

"I am told a squire Wills is there; I am come express to him."

"He's here, he's here," said Johnson: "come in." The man alighted, and Johnson rushed into the parlour with the express following him, who delivered a packet into Wills's hand. He begged the excuse of the company, and opening it, found it was sent by Mr. Jefferson, whom our reader, without doubt, remembers. Enclosed was a note from his aunt.

My dear child,

If you have a desire to see me, hasten hither: I am going to my long home. Come to me then, and let me ask your forgiveness before I die.

Thy affectionate aunt,

PRIS. KINGLEY.

"My

“My forgiveness! Gracious God!” exclaimed Wills: “let me fly, and pay my last duty to my benefactress, my mother, my every thing.” Johnson was desired to order a chaise to go post, and he explained the meaning of his surprise. The justice requested he would take some refreshment before he went off, which he consented to; but asked leave of Sir Lionel to visit him at Pine-hill on his return. The baronet answered: “he should be glad to see him.” The chaise was soon ready: but Lawson refused to go with him, for reasons that shall be hereafter explained. Wills took his leave of the company, and went, as fast as the horses could carry him, to London. The justice insisted upon their dining with him; which they all agreed to, except Lord Cotswold, whose carriage came and took him away, loaded with the contempt and hatred of the whole company.

After the dinner was over, Sir Lionel begged to know the truth of the story that had been so much misrepresented to Juliet. Belton answered him. Sir, I am “not ashamed to have my wants known,

“or the miseries I have suffered made public, if I can be of any service to Mr. Wills. Sophy, I beg you will inform this company of the whole transaction.” She obeyed: and as far as she knew, delivered the artless tale. Lawson closed it. He told the whole fund, he possessed that he was so generous from; related Lord Cotswold’s behaviour to him, and the fatal consequences of his liberality with his aunt, who, he hoped, upon her death-bed would have some more pity for him, than she had lately shewn. He also related the different adventures on the road, in order to shew the goodness of his friend’s heart.

The guests gave various opinions, as inclination led them, upon the different parts of his story. They all joined, however, in his praise. Belton, finding Lawson so intimate a friend of Wills’s, invited him to go home with him, which he complied with, not without an invitation to go to Pine-hill, where he also promised to pay his respects to Sir Lionel and the fair Juliet.

C H A P T E R XXXVI.

A retrospect. Mac Gregor's history. A melancholy scene.

WHILE Wills is travelling to London, it is necessary, in the mean time, to inform our readers of the great change in affairs, that caused his aunt to call him to her presence.

As soon as Mac Gregor had so successfully expelled Wills from his aunt's house, all his endeavour was, to establish himself in his place. It cannot be denied, but he was very agreeable to Miss Kingley: his prudence, his œconomy, his frugality, or, rather, parsimony, endeared him very much to her. She began to listen to his vows of regard for her with pleasure; but there was one thing that prevented her meeting his passion; and that was no other than a want of fortune on his side. Miss Kingley procrastinated matters as if she had been but fifteen; and all the captain's ardour could not make her determine to take that step, which would fix his eternal happiness.

ness. He had as many reasons for wishing to expedite the affair, as she had for delaying it. In this dubious state matters remained for a long time; though all the neighbourhood, with their accustomed sagacity, had made the match up long before. Mr. Jefferson the curate, who had a great regard for poor Wills, frequently endeavoured to introduce a conversation about him, and find out, if possible, the cause of his exile from his aunt's house. But this she always carefully avoided; giving it out, he was so bad, that there was no possibility of reclaiming him; and that she was therefore obliged to discard him. Mac Gregor, whenever he happened to be present, never failed to hint, that the extravagance of youth was of the most pernicious consequence; and ever added some dreadful example of it. Jefferson observed this enflamed Miss Kingley's rage eternally; and her passion and anger against her nephew were still kept alive by these insinuations. He therefore concluded there was some foul play going forward, as it was Mac Gregor's interest to keep the nephew off; but he was so deeply fixed in Miss Kingley's good graces, that it
would

would be rather a difficult matter to shake him.

Chance determined the whole affair. It might, with greater propriety, be stiled the finger of a wise and unerring providence. Jefferson was called out one morning to attend a poor woman, who, it was apprehended, was near her end, and desired to have a clergyman. He accordingly went. He found an elderly woman who appeared very ill, and had the remains of gentility about her, and in her manner, tho' her dress was plain and mean. When they were left by themselves, he demanded of her if she had any thing particular to say to him. She replied that she had not, but was a woman who was ruined by her own folly and credulity, and the insinuations of the most artful villain in the world. Jefferson asked her name. "My name was "Tulford; but I unhappily changed it for "Mac Gregor."

"That is your husband's name, I presume, Madam?"

"It

“It is, Sir: I wish I had never seen
“him.”

Jefferson asked her many questions, and found that her husband was the individual Captain Mac Gregor who was laying such close siege to Miss Kingley. He, therefore, requested her to inform him, how she got acquainted with him: which she did, and related her whole story to him. Jefferson was astonished; but imagining this might prove serviceable to his young friend, bade her endeavour to keep her spirits up; asked if she wanted any thing; and left some money with the woman of the house where she was, to provide her with necessaries: promising to call on her again, and bring some good ladies in the neighbourhood with him, who would contribute to relieve her from her present necessities. The poor gentlewoman thanked him; and he posted home as fast as he could, to tell his wife what had happened, desiring her, as she still had great sway with Miss Kingley, to go to her, and inform her in part of this matter, and to persuade her to accompany them that evening to see Mrs. Mac Gregor. Mrs. Jefferson, who had not
lost

lost her fondness for communicating intelligence, hurried to Miss Kingley; and so well did she relate and embellish such part of the story which her husband had entrusted her with, that she easily persuaded Miss Kingley to go along with them in the afternoon. She accordingly called on them in her coach, and they all went to the house where the sick woman was. Jefferson found her much better than in the morning, and then introduced his wife and Miss Kingley. They had brought some cordials, and other things, proper for her, which they very obligingly presented to her: and after she had recovered a little, Jefferson requested the favour of her to repeat the story she had related to him that day, as it would much oblige those Ladies. She began as follows:

“My knowledge of Captain Mac Gregor, as he called himself, tho’, in reality, he was but an ensign, began about four years ago; and I was then unhappily unacquainted with his character, which I have since, but too late for my peace, learned. It is needless to mention the place of his birth. He has all
“the

the frugal maxims, so particularly adopted by all the lower class of the people of that kingdom, ready at his fingers ends. By the interest of some friend, he got a pair of colours in one of the newly-raised regiments. Here, while other young men could hardly subsist upon their pay, he was making money of it. From a constant attention to the weakness and failings of his brother officers, he rendered himself necessary, and agreeable to them all. He praised and flattered the vain glorious; he assisted the lewd in their amours; and, to the prodigal, he lent small sums of money, which he exacted exorbitant interest for. His coolness and his avarice made him a gamester: and the command he had over his temper, eternally gave him the superiority over the rash and impetuous; an advantage he never failed to make the most of. An affair he had with a serjeant's wife, obliged him to refund some part of his ill-gotten property, to save himself from a prosecution that would not have been very pleasing to him; and his misbehaviour with a gentleman who called him into the field, so much disgusted the officers,

“cers, that they refused to roll with him,
“and he was obliged to fell out. How-
“ever, as the matter was liable to many
“misrepresentations, and he had very art-
“fully confused it so, that the truth could
“not easily be come at, his character was
“not looked upon as notorious. He there-
“fore came to London: and as the saving
“avaricious villain, with a few frugal and
“honest sentiments in his mouth, which cor-
“respond with his apparent manner of living,
“shall be honoured, applauded, and court-
“ed, where the generous and open-spirited
“man is despised and shunned, he found his
“end answered; but he had not any great
“opportunity of putting his arts in practice
“till he met me. I was a widow, and ra-
“ther advanced in years, when a young
“man, whose name was Davis, an half-pay
“officer, paid his addreses to me. I can’t
“say but I was pleased with, and had con-
“sented to be married to him. And here I
“cannot help reflecting upon my own fool-
“ishness, to imagine that I should be able
“to attach a young man to myself, who was
“then old; and never considered that it was
“my fortune, and not me, he married: and
“at that time I was worth above five thou-
“sand pounds. Davis, who I really believe

“was a worthy young man, was a little
“wild; and tho’ he might want part of my
“fortune to clear himself in the world, yet I
“believe he would have had generosity and
“gratitude enough to treat me well. The
“day was fixed that was to have made me
“his wife: and the day before that he had
“appointed to meet me to settle matters. I
“then lived in Essex, a little way from Lon-
“don. The greater part of the day passed
“away, and I was much surprized at never
“hearing from him. About the evening this
“Captain Mac Gregor came to me from his
“friend, with an apology for his absence.
“The friend of the man who was to be my
“husband, I could not refuse to shew every
“civility to. He delivered the excuse he was
“to make for his staying away with a very
“good grace: and told me how very unhap-
“py his friend was upon that account. I ex-
“pressed my uneasiness at it, and begged to
“know the cause. He replied, it was some
“business that must be settled. In our con-
“versation: in which he artfully mingled
“many hints of his own prudence and œco-
“nomy, happening to say, I imagined Mr.
“Davis was a little wild, he replied in such a
“manner as alarmed my suspicions; and beg-
“ging him to tell me if he knew any thing
“con-

“concerning him, he at first hesitated, and
“at last declared that he could not, on any
“account, be concerned in such an affair,
“without letting me know the truth of the
“matter. That though Davis was his friend,
“he would not be accessary to such a piece
“of treachery as suffering me to fall into his
“hands, whom he described as a gambler, a
“man of infinite extravagance and expence;
“dropped some hints as if he had been alrea-
“dy married, and that he was over head and
“ears in debt: and to shew the regard he had
“for me, offered to give me the most con-
“vincing proofs of his being at that instant in
“a spunging-house, and, consequently, if I
“married him, my fortune would become a
“prey to his creditors. This story, artfully
“told, sunk deep in my heart. I was enrag-
“ed at the villain, as I then thought him.
“The next day was to be that of my nuptials.
“Mac Gregor told me that it would be the
“best proof in the world of the truth of his
“story, if Davis did not come punctually to
“his time. I agreed with him. The next
“morning early Mac Gregor came to me, and
“no Davis appeared. What shall I say for
“myself? Irritated at the perfidy of Davis,
“and deluded by the apparent honesty of Mac
“Gregor, I became his wife that day, and
P 2 “in

“in an evil hour for me. He did not treat
“me long even with complaisance. He seiz-
“ed on my fortune, which I had not pru-
“dence enough to keep in my own power.
“He removed me to a great distance from
“the metropolis and my friends; and soon
“after stripped me of every thing I had, and
“left me in the extremest poverty. Indeed I
“might have imagined some such thing would
“have happened from his ill treatment of me.
“Abuse and blows I met with daily from
“him; and, as I learned, soon after I was
“married, those particulars of him which I
“have related previous to my knowledge of
“him, I had every thing to fear. I also
“found that he had been the means of hav-
“ing Davis arrested, in order to keep him
“away from me, that he might get me him-
“self. His scheme was but too successful.
“After enduring much misery and want, I
“made a shift to get thus far, in hopes of
“meeting him in London, and obtaining so-
“me redress. My relations and friends, who
“hoped to possess my fortune, are so exaspe-
“rated against me, that they refuse to assist
“me. This is all I have to say: and severely
“have I suffered from my own imprudence.”

Miss Kingley could hardly support herself
during this narration: but informing herself
where

where they were married, and leaving Mrs. Mac Gregor with a promise of seeing her the next day; she desired Mr. Jefferson would go post to this place, as it was not far off, and let her know whether it was true or no. For as she expected to see Mac Gregor the next day she would clear up this matter. In the mean time, she sent an apothecary to the sick woman. Jefferson, who prudently conjectured that an elucidation of this affair would be of the greatest utility to Wills, determined to strike the iron while it was hot; and set out that very evening. The next morning he returned with a proper authentication of the marriage of Alexander Mac Gregor with Elizabeth Tulford. Miss Kingley turned pale at the sight of it. "Oh, Mr. Jefferson, what have I escaped," said she. "The villain! what evils too have I made my poor Frank suffer! But I see that fellow coming. I will disguise my resentment: 'tis the only way I have to put myself on a footing with him, to be as great an hypocrite as himself. I shall beg the favour of you to accompany us to see his wife. We will also call on Mrs. Jefferson."

Mac Gregor, ignorant of the blow that was preparing for him, entered Miss King-

ley's with a smile on his countenance; and shaking his good friend Jefferson, as he called him, by the hand, asked, "Where the 'gude lady of the mansion was?" The other replied, she was above stairs, dressing herself. In a few minutes she came down, and expressing her joy to see the captain, said, he had come in good time to attend them on a party that they had made. "He was very 'happy:" and the coach being come to the door, they all set out together, calling by the way on Mrs. Jefferson, whom they took up. She went first up stairs, and desired Mrs. Mac Gregor to prepare herself for the sight of her husband: at the same time requesting her to step into a closet that was in the room. The rest of the company followed her up as soon as they thought she had settled matters properly. Jefferson, who entered the room last, stood against the door: and Miss Kingley who went in before the captain, as soon as she thought him fixed, asked Mrs. Jefferson, "how she found Mrs. Mac Gregor this evening?"

"She is better, Madam: pray step in." And opening the closet door, the captain's wife entered.

This

This was a stroke he could not guard against; but he resolved to parry it as well as he could, and appeared very careless, though he was half mad at the disappointment and discovery. He took no notice of her at the first. They stood silent some moments: at last she addressed him. "I suppose, Mr. Mac Gregor, you are very much surprized to find me here."

"For what, Madam, should I be surprized at the sight of a person I have not the honour of knowing?"

"Not know me, Sir! but I can prove myself your wife; and will do it."

"That is an impossibility," said the intrepid captain.

"No, Sir; I believe that I shall be able to do it," said Miss Kingley. Then taking the certificate from her pocket, she shewed it to him, and asked him if he remembered such a transaction. He acknowledged such a thing had once happened; and that the wife, mentioned there, was dead.

"No, Sir," said Jefferson interposing, "this is the lady, and we shall find a means of proving her identity."

“She’s a vile impostor,” said Mac Gregor, grinning with rage.

“Well, Sir,” said Miss Kingley, “then
“we will have her punished: and as you
“can prove without doubt where your wife
“died, I shall take this woman home with
“me, and keep her safe, that she may not
“escape: and as soon as you prove her a
“cheat, I will be yours, my worthy captain.
“Prepare yourself, Madam, to go
“along with me in the coach; the innocent
“captain will accompany us. And I shall
“always be glad to see you, dear Sir.”

This speech, delivered with a sneer, quite disconcerted the captain. He raved, he swore, he threatened; which but the more convinced them of his guilt. They went down stairs together. Miss Kingley put Mrs. Mac Gregor into the coach, and asked the captain to follow her. “No,” said he; “perdition seize you all together! You
“should have shared the same fate of that
“old fool, if I could have got you once
“into my hands: but you have escaped me.
“Damnation——!”

He

He said no more, but marched off to London as fast as he could, and never was seen in England after.

Miss Kingley had reason to thank heaven for her escape: she consoled Mrs. Mac Gregor, and assured her she would give her an annuity for her life; and if she chose to live with her, she might while she lived. Mrs. Mac Gregor complied. "And now," said Miss Kingley, "I shall have an hourly memorandum of my folly before my eyes. "But perhaps my dear boy, my poor Frank, "is suffering in indigence and necessity, from "my folly in listening to that villain's insinuations. My dear Mr. Jefferson, I must "once more be troublesome to you, to endeavour to find him out. I shall never be "easy till I see him, and ask his forgiveness "for the evils that I have occasioned him."

"I never undertook a task with greater "pleasure, Madam. I believe he was sadly, "misrepresented to you. I shall set about "it directly."

He did so: but his search was in vain.

Miss Kingley, whose natural affection for her nephew was always very great, though froze for a while by the hand of avarice, and
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the insinuation of Mac Gregor, now thawed apace, and her whole heart was deluged with the returning stream. She conceived that her nephew was gone abroad, and that he was ruined, or perhaps distracted, by her unkindness. She fell ill. Jefferson renewed his search, and acquainting the people where he lodged, and at the coffee-house he used to frequent, with the bad consequence that might attend their concealment of him, they directed him at last where he might be found, which he had ordered to be kept a great secret. The express which the reader has already heard that Wills received, was then sent off, and Jefferson returned to inform Miss Kingley of his success. She still grew worse. Her uneasiness at her treatment of him, the reflection of her being thus imposed on, preyed upon her spirits, and reduced her very low: but for fear she should be snatched away before she could do her nephew justice, she sent for a notary, and, in proper form, bequeathed every thing she had in the world to him; making him sole executor. She grew worse and the physicians delivered it as their opinions, she could not live another day. Mr. Jefferson constantly attended her, and all she had to lament in this world was, her not seeing her
dear

dear Frank. At that instant he arrived; for he had not delayed a moment to take any rest by the way. When he heard how dangerously ill his aunt was, every trace of her ill treatment was obliterated, and nothing remained in his remembrance, but her fondness, her generosity, and her tenderness to him during his life. As soon as she heard he was come, she sent for him. He approached the bed where she lay, choaked with sorrow. "Oh! my child," said the expiring aunt, "I shall now die contented to have seen you. But you must forgive me, indeed you must, for treating you so cruelly."

"Oh! Madam," said he, throwing himself on his knees by her bed-side, seizing her hand which she held towards him, and bathing it with his tears, "talk not thus. It is I who have offended you; let me have the happiness to hear you pardon me."

"I do, I do, Frank; from my soul I do: but though I have used you ill when I was imposed on, I have done you all the justice I could. Indeed, my dear child, the remembrance of it lies close, very close to my heart."

"Forget it, forget it, my ever-dear, my much-revered parent," said the affectionate
Wills

Wills, dissolved with tenderness and affliction.
 “You never wronged or injured me.”

“Let that rest, Frank: you are master
 “of all our fortune, which has been encreas-
 “ed rather than diminished in my hands. I
 “have nothing to recommend to you, but to
 “give Mrs. Mac Gregor fifty pounds a year
 “while she lives; why, Mr. Jefferson will
 “tell you, who has been your very good
 “friend: take care of him.”

Her speech failed her, and Wills thought she was gone. He called for help, and she recovered again. He sat by her. He kept his hand in hers, and she just recovered her speech to bid him farewell. Recommending her spirit into the hands of him who gave it, and fixing her dying eyes upon her beloved nephew, she expired without a groan.

C H A P T E R XXXVII.

A trip to Pine-hill. The history and chapter concluded by two engagements.

WILLS, who really loved his aunt, was much afflicted at her death. He conferred with Jefferson concerning Mrs. Mac Gregor, who informed him of the villany of the
 the

the Captain. He could scarcely believe it. However, he obeyed his aunt's desire, though she did not live a great while to benefit by it. He buried his aunt along with her two sisters, with great solemnity and pomp; and, inspecting her papers, found himself master of a landed estate of about six hundred pounds a year, and, in mortgages and securities for money, to the value of near eighty five thousand pounds more; a distant relation having left her near twenty thousand pounds, when she did not want it. This circumstance Wills knew nothing of, till after her death. And now he prepared to visit his adorable Juliet, whom, nothing but his affection for his aunt, could have made him forget for a moment. He, therefore, as soon as he had put himself and servants in mourning, set out post for Pine-hill, taking some cloaths, &c. for Lawson, who, as he supposed, stood in want of them. But we think it necessary, both for our reader and ourself, being much more expeditiously conveyed than Wills, to step before him to Pine-hill, and see what has been doing in his absence. We promised also to inform our said reader, what was the reason why Lawson would not accompany Wills to London: and this was not occasioned by any want of friendship in him, but because he

thought he should employ his time much better in talking to Sophia Belton, with whom he was much smitten.

Sir Lionel Harcourt had given Mr. and Miss Belton an invitation to come to Pine-hill: and the two young ladies soon became intimate. Sir Lionel Harcourt, whose character we have already delineated, grew, on a sudden, the reverse of what he had been: he became generous and affable. He preserved his dignity, but did it without that offensive pride and haughtiness that served only to disgust every body that came near him. As this is one of those changes that should be properly accounted for to make it probable, we shall endeavour to assign some reasons for it. Sir Lionel, who had always regarded the acquisition of wealth as a means of making himself beloved, had, from an unequal distribution of the gifts of fortune in his favour, attached himself to that maxim. For several years he adhered closely to it, but it did not answer his end. The severity of his temper, and the distance he kept the rest of mankind at, produced fear and distrust. He did not want sense: he had also applied himself lately very closely to reading, and had consequently improved it: but he could not change his manners

ners confirmed by time. The scene with Wills at the justice's shewed him the path he should have followed. "This young man," said he, "with so trifling a fortune, has done much good, and rendered himself beloved by every body. He feels for distress, and relieves it. He must have more pleasure in doing so, than I have had in the accumulation of riches. I am not ashamed to be taught." Lord Cotswold's character also appeared to him in a shocking light: and he secretly rejoiced at his daughter's having escaped an union with a man of his principles. He therefore began to practise the reverse of the conduct he had heretofore pursued: he succeeded to his wish; and found joy and affection in every eye that used to look on him with fear and hatred.

Lawson, who, as Wills's friend, was well received at Mr. Belton's at first, was now carested on his own account, and drank large draughts of love from Sophia's eyes. He was not disagreeable to her. 'Tis true, if she had not known that Wills's heart was engaged, she would have been more happy with him; but Lawson, on that account, was soon on a very good footing with her.

When Wills arrived at Pine-hill, Sir Lionel received him with great affection: and having already learned from his daughter's mouth, that he was her deliverer; he told him that he must be indebted to him to take care of her, since he had saved her life. Wills thanked him with great joy, and acquainting him of the situation of his fortune. Sir Lionel congratulated him on it, and told him he would send Juliet to wish him joy also. She came blooming like the morning, and, blushing as she spoke, welcomed him to Pine-hill. Wills snatched her to his enraptured arms, and enjoyed the blessing of a willing embrace. And here, reader if thou wert ever in love, and met the admired object, full of tenderness, joy, and mutual love, thou mayest form some idea of the rapturous interview of this virtuous, this lovely pair. We confess our powers to be totally inadequate to the description of it, and therefore we shall not attempt it. Wills, however, was happy to his utmost wishes, in the sight and affection of his beloved Juliet. He presented her with a very costly and elegant set of jewels he had purchased, and which she received as a mark of his esteem for her. Sir Lionel commended his taste and gallantry, when his dear child shewed them to him; her

her eyes sparkling with pleasure and transport, while she displayed that trophy of her charms, and presented by his hand. In a few days Mr. and Miss Belton, and Lawson, came to Pine hill: they were a family of harmony and love, and nothing was talked of but the approaching ceremony that was to complete their felicity.

In the mean time, Lord Cotswold bore very indignantly the triumph of Wills at the justice's: and hearing of this change in his fortune, and the preparations they were making at Pine-hill for his nuptials with his quondam mistress, determined to call him to an account for the liberties he had taken with him. He accordingly sent a gentleman, a friend of his, to Pine-hill, with a message to Mr. Wills, naming the day and place where he expected to meet him with a friend. Wills promised to be punctual; and informing Lawson of the matter, they set out very early the next morning, and found his Lordship ready. Wills asked him, "what was the cause of this message?" He replied, "his extraordinary insolence, and his pretending to Miss Harcourt."

"Nay," said Wills, "it is your insolence should be punished: and as for Miss Har-

“court, he must kill me, who possesses her.
“Not to lose my life in asserting my right to
“her, would speak me base indeed.”

They both drew: the seconds interposed, and wished some mode of reconciliation might be found out. Lord Cotswold said, “there could be none devised, that would wash away the stain of infamy that Mr. Wills had cast upon him, but his blood.” Wills then desired Lawson to stand aside, and they engaged. Fortune was at the beginning pretty equal. Wills received the first wound. The sword passed under his arm, and scratched him, but slightly: but his Lordship, not having recovered soon enough from his lunge to guard against his antagonist’s agility, he got within his guard, and disarmed him. “You are born to triumph over me,” said Lord Cotswold; “and I must yield to you performance. I won’t remain here a witness of your happiness obtained at my expence.” He quitted the field, and left the kingdom soon after. Wills got his wound dressed. Being very small, it was soon healed; and he hoped the affair would not be made known. As they were returning, Lawson acquainted him with the situation of his heart: and his friend promised to do every thing he could for him.

As

As neither Wills nor Lawson could be found in the morning, it gave great uneasiness to the family at Pine-hill. The women knew not what was the cause of it: and both Juliet and Sophy were very unhappy, and communicated their fears to each other. However, Sir Lionel composed them a little, by saying, "he was sure they were gone upon some frolic, and intended to surprize the girls on their return." But to Belton he could not help owning, that he was as uneasy as they were. He was not a little pleased to see them return: and pressing Wills very home concerning his morning expedition, he learned the truth with much difficulty from him, which he entreated him to conceal from Juliet. However, the servants, having seen Lord Cotswold's carriage driving in a hurry from the field, mentioned it at home, and it came to Juliet's ears; who, guessing what had happened, gently chid her lover for exposing his life to danger, which was so dear to her. Wills calmed her fears by promising never to offend again. He did not let his friend's affair cool: but recommended Lawson strongly to Mr. Belton: and Sophy not opposing, they determined to be made happy on the same day.

It

It came at last, and the two friends were supremely blessed. Nor was the joy on this occasion confined to them alone: the whole country partook of it. The fathers grew young again in the prospect of the happiness of their dear children. Wills, possessed of every thing the heart of man can wish for, shews his gratitude, by endeavouring to make every body happy about him. In this task he is assisted by his lovely partner, who begins to grow too unwieldy to take much exercise.

The reward of guilt is misery: The tenaciousness of avarice brings its own punishment: The violation of truth is followed by shame and remorse; and a life of iniquity is terminated in woe. But peace and honour shall attend on him, whose honest and upright heart, conscious of its integrity actuated by a principle of universal benevolence, feels and relieves, not only the distresses of virtue and merit, but even strives to assuage the anguish that is the eternal lot of the wicked: happiness shall stand at his right hand, and content shall crown his days.

F I N I S.

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F I N I S.

Goldsmith, Oliver, 1728-1774

The triumph of benevolence, or the history of Francis Will

Bd.: 1

Berlin 1786

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